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*THE BROKEN ROAD.*<sup>1</sup>

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CHAPTER XIX.

A GIFT MISUNDERSTOOD.

THE month was over before Linforth at last steamed out of the harbour at Marseilles. He was as impatient to reach Bombay as a year before Shere Ali had been reluctant. To Shere Ali the boat had flown with wings of swiftness, to Linforth she was a laggard. The steamer passed Stromboli on a wild night of storm and moonlight. The wrack of clouds scurrying overhead, now obscured, now let the moonlight through, and the great cone rising sheer from a tempestuous sea glowed angrily. Linforth, in the shelter of a canvas screen, watched the glow suddenly expand, and a stream of bright sparkling red flow swiftly along the shoulder of the mountain, turn at a right angle, and plunge down towards the sea. The bright red would become dull, the dull red grow black, the glare of light above the cone contract for a little while and then burst out again. Yet men lived upon the slope of Stromboli, even as Englishmen—the thought flashed into his mind—lived in India, recognising the peril and going quietly about their work. There was always that glare of menacing light on the hill-districts of India as above the crater of Stromboli, now contracting, now expanding, and casting its molten stream down towards the plains.

At the moment when Linforth watched the crown of light above Stromboli, the glare was widening over the hill country of Chiltistan. Ralston so far away as Peshawur saw it reddening

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the sky and was the more troubled in that he could not discover why just at this moment the menace should glow red. The son of Abdulla Mohammed was apparently quiet and Shere Ali had not left Calcutta. The Resident at Kohara admitted the danger. Every despatch he sent to Peshawur pointed to the likelihood of trouble. But he too was at fault. Unrest was evident, the cause of it quite obscure. But what was hidden from Government House in Peshawur and the Old Mission House at Kohara was already whispered in the bazaars. There among the thatched booths which have their backs upon the brink of the water-channel in the great square, men knew very well that Shere Ali was the cause, though Shere Ali knew nothing of it himself. One of those queer little accidents possible in the East had happened within the last few weeks. A trifling gift had been magnified into a symbol and a message, and the message had run through Chiltistan like fire through a dry field of stubble. And then two events occurred in Peshawur which gave to Ralston the key of the mystery.

The first was the arrival in that city of a Hindu lady from Gujerat who had lately come to the conclusion that she was a reincarnation of the goddess Devi. She arrived in great pomp, and there was some trouble in the streets as the procession passed through to the temple which she had chosen as her residence. For the Hindus on the one hand firmly believed in her divinity. The lady came of a class which, held in dishonour in the West, has its social position and prestige in India. There was no reason in the eyes of the faithful why she should say she was the Goddess Devi if she were not. Therefore they lined the streets to acclaim her coming. The Mohammedans, on the other hand, Afghans from the far side of the Khyber, men of the Hassan and the Aka and the Adam Khel tribes, Afridis from Kohat and Tirah and the Araksai country—any who happened to be in that wild and crowded town, turned out too—to keep order, as they pleasantly termed it when their leaders were subsequently asked for explanations. In the end a good many heads were broken and some properly damaged before the lady was safely lodged in her temple. Nor did the trouble end there. The presence of a reincarnated Devi at once kindled the Hindus to fervour and stimulated to hostility against them the fanatical Mohammedans. Futteh Ali Shah, a merchant, a municipal councillor, and a landowner of some importance, headed a deputation to Ralston of elderly gentlemen who begged him to remove the danger from the city.

Danger there was, as Ralston on his morning rides through the streets could not but understand. The temple was built in the corner of an open space, and upon that open space a noisy and excited crowd surged all day; while from the countryside around pilgrims in a mood of frenzied piety and Pathans spoiling for a fight trooped daily in through the gates of Peshawur. Ralston understood that the time had come for definite steps to be taken; and he took them with that unconcerned half-weary air which was at once natural to him and impressive to these particular people with whom he had to deal.

He summoned two of his native levies and mounted his horse.

'But you will take a guard,' said Colonel Ward, of the Oxfordshires, who had been lunching with Ralston. 'I'll send a company down with you.'

'No, thank you,' said Ralston listlessly, 'I think my two men will do.'

The Colonel stared and expostulated.

'You know, Ralston, you are very rash. Your predecessor never rode into the City without an escort.'

'I do every morning.'

'I know,' returned the Colonel, 'and that's where you are wrong. Some day something will happen. To go down with two of your levies to-day is madness. I speak seriously. The place is in a ferment.'

'Oh, I think I'll be all right,' said Ralston, and he rode at a trot down from Government House into the road which leads past the gaol and the Fort to the gate of Peshawur. At the gate he reduced the trot to a walk, and so, with his two levies behind him, passed up along the streets like a man utterly undisturbed. It was not bravado which had made him refuse an escort. On the contrary, it was policy. To assume that no one questioned his authority was in Ralston's view the best way and the quickest to establish it. He pushed forward through the crowd right up to the walls of the temple, seemingly indifferent to every cry or threat which was uttered as he passed. The throng closed in behind him, and he came to a halt in front of a low door set in the whitewashed wall which enclosed the temple and its precincts. Upon this door he beat with the butt of his crop and a little wicket in the door was opened. At the bars of the wicket an old man's face showed for a moment and then drew back in fear.

'Open!' cried Ralston peremptorily.

| The face appeared again.

'Your Excellency, the goddess is meditating. Besides, this is holy ground. Your Excellency would not wish to set foot on it. Moreover, the courtyard is full of worshippers. It would not be safe.'

Ralston broke in upon the old man's fluttering protestations. 'Open the door, or my men will break it in.'

A murmur of indignation arose from the crowd which thronged about him. Ralston paid no heed to it. He called to his two levies:

'Quick! Break that door in!'

As they advanced the door was opened. Ralston dismounted, and bade one of his men do likewise and follow him. To the second man he said,

'Hold the horses!'

He strode into the courtyard and stood still.

'It will be touch and go,' he said to himself, as he looked about him.

The courtyard was as thronged as the open space without, and four strong walls enclosed it. The worshippers were strangely silent. It seemed to Ralston that suspense had struck them dumb. They looked at the intruder with set faces and impassive eyes. At the far end of the courtyard there was a raised stone platform, and this part was roofed. At the back in the gloom he could see a great idol of the goddess, and in front, facing the courtyard, stood the lady from Gujerat. She was what Ralston expected to see—a dancing-girl of Northern India, a girl with a good figure, small hands and feet, and a complexion of an olive tint. Her eyes were large and lustrous, with a line of black pencilled upon the edges of the eyelids, her eyebrows arched and regular, her face oval, her forehead high. The dress was richly embroidered with gold, and she had anklets with silver bells upon her feet.

Ralston pushed his way through the courtyard until he reached the wall of the platform.

'Come down and speak to me,' he cried peremptorily to the lady, but she took no notice of his presence. She did not move so much as an eyelid. She gazed over his head as one lost in meditation. From the side an old priest advanced to the edge of the platform.

'Go away,' he cried insolently. 'You have no place here. The goddess does not speak to any but her priests,' and through the throng there ran a murmur of approval. There was a movement,



too—a movement towards Ralston. It was as yet a hesitating movement—those behind pushed, those in front and within Ralston's vision held back. But at any moment the movement might become a rush.

Ralston spoke to the priest.

'Come down, you dog!'

The priest was silent. He hesitated. He looked for help to the crowd below, which in turn looked for leadership to him. 'Come down,' once more cried Ralston, and he moved towards the steps as though he would mount on to the platform and tear the fellow down.

'I come, I come,' said the priest, and he went down and stood before Ralston.

Ralston turned to the Pathan who accompanied him. 'Turn the fellow into the street.'

Protests rose from the crowd; the protests became cries of anger; the throng swayed and jostled. But the Pathan led the priest to the door and thrust him out.

Again Ralston turned to the platform.

'Listen to me,' he called out to the lady from Gujerat. 'You must leave Peshawur. You are a trouble to the town. I will not let you stay.'

But the lady paid no heed. Her mind floated above the earth, and with every moment the danger grew. Closer and closer the throng pressed in upon Ralston and his attendant. The clamour rose shrill and menacing. Ralston cried out to his Pathan in a voice which rang clear and audible even above the clamour:

'Bring handcuffs!'

The words were heard and silence fell upon all that crowd, the sudden silence of stupefaction. That such an outrage, such a defilement of a holy place, could be contemplated came upon the worshippers with a shock. But the Pathan levy was seen to be moving towards the door to obey the order, and as he went the cries and threats rose with redoubled ardour. For a moment it seemed to Ralston that the day would go against him. So fierce were the faces which shouted in his ears, so turbulent the movement of the crowd. It needed just one hand to be laid upon the Pathan's shoulder as he forced his way towards the door, just one blow to be struck, and the ugly rush would come. But the hand was not stretched out, nor the blow struck; and the Pathan was seen actually at the threshold of the door. Then the goddess

Devi came down to earth and spoke to another of her priests quickly and urgently. The priest went swiftly down the steps.

'The goddess will leave Peshawur, since your Excellency so wills it,' he said to Ralston. 'She will shake the dust of this city from her feet. She will not bring trouble upon its people. Only, if she goes, there must be a procession.' Ralston glanced towards the door, and signalled to the Pathan to stop.

'Very well. There shall be a procession, this afternoon. For she must go this afternoon.'

And he made his way out of the courtyard into the street. The lady from Gujerat left Peshawur three hours later. The streets were lined with levies, although the Mohammedans assured his Excellency that there was no need for troops.

'We ourselves will keep order,' they urged. Ralston smiled, and ordered up another company. He himself rode out from Government House, and at the bend of the road he met the procession, with the lady from Gujerat at its head in a litter with drawn curtains of tawdry gold.

As the procession came abreast of him a little brown hand was thrust out from the curtains, and the bearers and the rabble behind came to a halt. A man in a rough brown homespun cloak with a beggar's bowl attached to his girdle came to the side of the litter, and thence went across to Ralston.

'Your Highness, the goddess Devi has a word for your ear alone.' Ralston, with a shrug of his shoulders, walked his horse up to the side of the litter and bent down his head. The lady spoke through the curtains in a whisper.

'Your Excellency has been very kind to me, and allowed me to leave Peshawur with a procession, guarding the streets so that I might pass in safety and with great honour. Therefore I make a return. There is a matter which troubles your Excellency. You ask yourself the why and the wherefore, and there is no answer. But the danger grows.'

Ralston's thoughts flew out towards Chiltistan. Was it of that country she was speaking?

'Well?' he asked. 'Why does the danger grow?'

'Because bags of grain and melons were sent,' she replied, 'and the message was understood.'

She waved her hand again, and the bearers of the litter stepped forward on their march through the cantonment. Ralston rode up the hill to his home, wondering what in the world was the

meaning of her oracular words. It might be that she had no meaning—that was certainly a possibility. She might merely be keeping up her pose as a divinity. On the other hand, she had been so careful to speak in a low whisper, lest any should overhear.

'Some melons and bags of grain,' he said to himself. 'What message could they convey? And who sent them? And to whom?'

He wrote that night to the Resident at Kohara, on the chance that he might be able to throw some light upon the problem.

'Have you heard anything of a melon and a bag of grain?' he wrote. 'It seems an absurd question, but please make inquiries. Find out what it all means.'

The messenger carried the letter over the Malakand Pass and up the road by Dir, and in due time an answer was returned. Ralston received the answer late one afternoon, when the light was failing, and, taking it over to the window, read it through. Its contents fairly startled him.

'I have made inquiries,' wrote Captain Phillips, the Resident, 'as you wished, and I have found out that some melons and bags of grain were sent by Shere Ali's orders a few weeks ago as a present to one of the chief mullahs in the town.'

Ralston was brought to a stop. So it was Shere Ali after all who was at the bottom of the trouble. It was Shere Ali who had sent the present, and had sent it to one of the Mullahs. Ralston looked back upon the little dinner party, whereby he had brought Hatch and Shere Ali together. Had that party been too successful, he wondered? Had it achieved more than he had wished to bring about? He turned in doubt to the letter which he held.

'It seems,' he read, 'that there had been some trouble between this man and Shere Ali. There is a story that Shere Ali set him to work for a day upon a bridge just below Kohara. But I do not know whether there is any truth in the story. Nor can I find that any particular meaning is attached to the present. I imagine that Shere Ali realised that it would be wise—as undoubtedly it was—for him to make his peace with the Mullah, and sent him accordingly the melons and the bags of grain as an earnest of his goodwill.'

There the letter ended, and Ralston stood by the window as the light failed more and more from off the earth, pondering with a heavy heart upon its contents. He had to make his choice

between the Resident at Kohara and the lady of Gujerat. Captain Phillips held that the present was not interpreted in any symbolic sense. But the lady of Gujerat had known of the present. It was matter of talk, then, in the bazaars, and it would hardly have been that had it meant no more than an earnest of good-will. She had heard of the present; she knew what it was held to convey. It was a message. There was that glare broadening over Chiltistan. Surely the lady of Gujerat was right.

So far his thoughts had carried him when across the window there fell a shadow, and a young officer of the Khyber Rifles passed by to the door. Captain Singleton was announced, and a boy—or so he looked—dark-haired and sunburnt, entered the office. For eighteen months he had been stationed in the fort at Landi Kotal, whence the road dips down between the bare brown cliffs towards the plains and mountains of Afghanistan. With two other English officers he had taken his share in the difficult task of ruling that regiment of wild tribesmen which twice a week, perched in threes on some rock promontory, or looking down from a machicolated tower, keeps open the Khyber Pass from dawn to dusk and protects the caravans. The eighteen months had written their history upon his face; he stood before Ralston, for all his youthful looks, a quiet self-reliant man.

‘I have come down on leave, sir,’ he said. ‘On the way I fetched Rahat Mian out of his house and brought him in to Peshawur.’

Ralston looked up with interest.

‘Any trouble?’ he asked.

‘I took care there should be none.’

Ralston nodded.

‘He had better be safely lodged. Where is he?’

‘I have him outside.’

Ralston rang for lights, and then said to Singleton:

‘Then, I’ll see him now.’

And in a few minutes an elderly white-bearded man, dressed from head to foot in his best white robes, was shown into the room.

‘This is his Excellency,’ said Captain Singleton, and Rahat Mian bowed with dignity and stood waiting. But while he stood his eyes roamed inquisitively about the room.

‘All this is strange to you, Rahat Mian,’ said Ralston. ‘How long is it since you left your house in the Khyber Pass?’

‘Five years, your Highness,’ said Rahat Mian, quietly, as

though there were nothing very strange in so long a confinement within his doors.

'Have you never crossed your threshold for five years?' asked Ralston.

'No, your Highness. I should not have stepped back over it again, had I been so foolish. Before, yes. There was a deep trench dug between my house and the road, and I used to crawl along the trench when no one was about. But after a little my enemies saw me walking in the road, and watched the trench.'

Rahat Mian lived in one of the square mud windowless houses, each with a tower at a corner which dot the green wheat fields in the Khyber Pass wherever the hills fall back and leave a level space. His house was fifty yards from the road, and the trench stretched to it from his very door. But not two hundred yards away there were other houses, and one of these held Rahat Mian's enemies. The feud went back many years to the date when Rahat Mian, without asking anyone's leave or paying a single farthing of money, secretly married the widowed mother of Futteh Ali Shah. Now Futteh Ali Shah was a boy of fourteen who had the right to dispose of his mother in second marriage as he saw fit, and for the best price he could obtain. And this deprivation of his rights kindled in him a great anger against Rahat Mian. He nursed it until he became a man and was able to buy for a couple of hundred rupees a good pedigree rifle—a rifle which had belonged to a soldier killed in a hill-campaign and for which inquiries would not be made. Armed with his pedigree rifle, Futteh Ali Shah lay in wait vainly for Rahat Mian, until an unexpected bequest caused a revolution in his fortunes. He went down to Bombay, added to his bequest by becoming a money-lender, and finally returned to Peshawur, in the neighbourhood of which city he had become a landowner of some importance. Meanwhile, however, he had not been forgetful of Rahat Mian. He left relations behind to carry on the feud, and in addition he set a price on Rahat Mian's head. It was this feud which Ralston had it in his mind to settle.

He turned to Rahat Mian.

'You are willing to make peace?'

'Yes,' said the old man.

'You will take your most solemn oath that the feud shall end. You will swear to divorce your wife, if you break your word?'

For a moment Rahat Mian hesitated. There was no oath more

binding, more sacred, than that which he was called upon to take. In the end he consented.

'Then come here at eight to-morrow morning,' said Ralston, and, dismissing the man, he gave instructions that he should be safely lodged. He sent word to the same effect to Futteh Ali Shah, with whom, not for the first time, he had had trouble.

Futteh Ali Shah arrived late the next morning in order to show his independence. But he was not so late as Ralston, who replied by keeping him waiting for an hour. When Ralston entered the room he saw that Futteh Ali Shah had dressed himself for the occasion. His tall high-shouldered frame was buttoned up in a grey frock coat, grey trousers clothed his legs, and he wore patent-leather shoes upon his feet.

'I hope you have not been waiting very long. They should have told me you were here,' said Ralston, and though he spoke politely, there was just a suggestion that it was not really of importance whether Futteh Ali Shah was kept waiting or not.

'I have brought you here that together we may put an end to your dispute with Rahat Mian,' said Ralston, and, taking no notice of the exclamation of surprise which broke from the Pathan's lips, he rang the bell and ordered Rahat Mian to be shown in.

'Now let us see if we cannot come to an understanding,' said Ralston, and he seated himself between the two antagonists.

But though they talked for an hour, they came no nearer to a settlement. Futteh Ali Shah was obdurate; Rahat Mian's temper and pride rose in their turn. At the sight of each other the old grievance became fresh as a thing of yesterday in both their minds. Their dark faces, with the high cheek-bones and the beaked noses of the Afridi, became passionate and fierce. Finally Futteh Ali Shah forgot all his Bombay manners; he leaned across Ralston, and cried to Rahat Mian:

'Do you know what I would like to do with you? I would like to string my bedstead with your skin and lie on it.'

And upon that Ralston came to the conclusion that the meeting might as well come to an end.

He dismissed Rahat Mian, promising him a safe conveyance to his home. But he had not yet done with Futteh Ali Shah.

'I am going out,' he said suavely. 'Shall we walk a little way together?'

Futteh Ali Shah smiled. Landowner of importance that he was, the opportunity to ride side by side through Peshawur with

the Chief Commissioner did not come every day. The two men went out into the porch. Ralston's horse was waiting, with a scarlet-clad syce at its head. Ralston walked on down the steps and took a step or two along the drive. Futteh Ali Shah lagged behind.

'Your Excellency is forgetting your horse.'

'No,' said Ralston. 'The horse can follow. Let us walk a little. It is a good thing to walk.'

It was nine o'clock in the morning, and the weather was getting hot. And it is said that the heat of Peshawur is beyond the heat of any other city from the hills to Cape Comorin. Futteh Ali Shah, however, could not refuse. Regretfully he signalled to his own groom who stood apart in charge of a fine dark bay stallion from the Kirghiz Steppes. The two men walked out from the garden and down the road towards Peshawur city, with their horses following behind them.

'We will go this way,' said Ralston, and he turned to the left and walked along a mud-walled lane between rich orchards heavy with fruit. For a mile they thus walked, and then Futteh Ali Shah stopped and said :

'I am very anxious to have your Excellency's opinion of my horse. I am very proud of it.'

'Later on,' said Ralston, carelessly. 'I want to walk for a little'; and, conversing upon indifferent topics, they skirted the city and came out upon the broad open road which runs to Jamrud and the Khyber Pass.

It was here that Futteh Ali Shah once more pressingly invited Ralston to try the paces of his stallion. But Ralston again refused.

'I will with pleasure later on,' he said. 'But a little exercise will be good for both of us'; and they continued to walk along the road. The heat was overpowering; Futteh Ali Shah was soft from too much good living; his thin patent-leather shoes began to draw his feet and gall his heels; his frock coat was tight; the perspiration poured down his face. Ralston was hot, too. But he strode on with apparent unconcern, and talked with the utmost friendliness on the municipal affairs of Peshawur.

'It is very hot,' said Futteh Ali Shah, 'and I am afraid for your Excellency's health. For myself, of course, I am not troubled, but so much walking will be dangerous to you'; and he halted and looked longingly back to his horse.

'Thank you,' said Ralston. 'But my horse is fresh, and I



should not be able to talk to you so well. I do not feel that I am in danger.'

Futteh Ali Shah mopped his face and walked on. His feet blistered; he began to limp, and he had nothing but a riding-switch in his hand. Now across the plain he saw in the distance the round fort of Jamrud, and he suddenly halted:

'I must sit down,' he said. 'I cannot help it, your Excellency I must stop and sit down.'

Ralston turned to him with a look of cold surprise.

'Before me, Futteh Ali Shah? You will sit down in my presence before I sit down? I think you will not.'

Futteh Ali Shah gazed up the road and down the road, and saw no help anywhere. Only this devilish Chief Commissioner stood threateningly before him. With a gesture of despair he wiped his face and walked on. For a mile more he limped on by Ralston's side, the while Ralston discoursed upon the great question of Agricultural Banks. Then he stopped again and blurted out:

'I will give you no more trouble. If your Excellency will let me go, never again will I give you trouble. I swear it.'

Ralston smiled. He had had enough of the walk himself.

'And Rahat Mian?' he asked.

There was a momentary struggle in the zemindar's mind. But his fatigue and exhaustion were too heavy upon him.

'He, too, shall go his own way. Neither I nor mine shall molest him.'

Ralston turned at once and mounted his horse. With a sigh of relief Futteh Ali Shah followed his example.

'Shall we ride back together?' said Ralston, pleasantly. And as on the way out he had made no mention of any trouble between the landowner and himself, so he did not refer to it by a single word on his way back.

But close to the city their ways parted and Futteh Ali Shah, as he took his leave, said hesitatingly,

'If this story goes abroad, your Excellency—this story of how we walked together towards Jamrud—there will be much laughter and ridicule.'

The fear of ridicule—there was the weak point of the Afridi, as Ralston very well knew. To be laughed at—Futteh Ali Shah, who was wont to lord it among his friends, writhed under the mere possibility. And how they would laugh in and round about Peshawur! A fine figure he would cut as he rode through the

streets with every ragged bystander jeering at the man who was walked into docility and submission by his Excellency the Chief Commissioner.

'My life would be intolerable,' he said, 'were the story to get about.'

Ralston shrugged his shoulders.

'But why should it get about?'

'I do not know, but it surely will. It may be that the trees have ears and eyes and a mouth to speak.' He edged a little nearer to the Commissioner. 'It may be too,' he said cunningly, 'that your Excellency loves to tell a good story after dinner. Now there is one way to stop that story.'

Ralston laughed. 'If I could hold my tongue you mean,' he replied.

Futteh Ali Shah came nearer still. He rode up close and leaned a little over towards Ralston.

'Your Excellency would lose the story,' he said, 'but on the other hand there would be a gain—a gain of many hours of sleep passed otherwise in guessing.'

He spoke in an insinuating fashion, which made Ralston disinclined to strike a bargain—and he nodded his head like one who wishes to convey that he could tell much if only he would. But Ralston paused before he answered, and when he answered it was only to put a question.

'What do you mean?' he asked.

And the reply came in a low quick voice.

'There was a message sent through Chiltistan.'

Ralston started. Was it in this strange way the truth was to come to him? He sat his horse carelessly. 'I know,' he said. 'Some melons and some bags of grain.'

Futteh Ali Shah was disappointed. This devilish Chief Commissioner knew everything. Yet the story of the walk must not get abroad in Peshawur, and surely it would unless the Chief Commissioner were pledged to silence. He drew a bow at a venture.

'Can your Excellency interpret the message? As they interpret it in Chiltistan?' and it seemed to him that he had this time struck true.

'It is a little thing I ask of your Excellency.'

'It is not a great thing, to be sure,' Ralston admitted. He looked at the zemindar and laughed. 'But I could tell the story rather well,' he said doubtfully. 'It would be an amusing story

as I should tell it. Yet—well, we will see,' and he changed his tone suddenly. 'Interpret to me that present as it is interpreted in the villages of Chiltistan.'

Futteh Ali Shah looked about him fearfully, making sure that there was no one within earshot. Then in a whisper he said: 'The grain is the army which will rise up from the hills and descend from the heavens to destroy the power of the Government. The melons are the forces of the Government; for as easily as melons they will be cut into pieces.'

He rode off quickly when he had ended like a man who understands that he has said too much; and then halted and returned.

'You will not tell that story?' he said.

'No,' answered Ralston abstractedly. 'I shall never tell that story.'

He understood the truth at last. So that was the message which Shere Ali had sent. No wonder, he thought, that the glare broadened over Chiltistan.

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE SOLDIER AND THE JEW.

THESE two events took place at Peshawur, while Linforth was still upon the waters of the Red Sea. To be quite exact, on that morning when Ralston was taking his long walk towards Jamrud with the zemindar Futteh Ali Shah, Linforth was watching impatiently from his deck-chair the high mosque towers, the white domes and great houses of Mocha, as they shimmered in the heat at the water's edge against a wide background of yellow sand. It seemed to him that the long narrow city so small and clear across the great level of calm sea would never slide past the taffrail. But it disappeared, and in due course the ship moved slowly through the narrows into Aden harbour. This was on a Thursday evening, and the steamer stopped in Aden for three hours to coal. The night came on hot, windless, and dark. Linforth leaned over the side, looking out upon the short curve of lights and the black mass of hill rising dimly above them. Three and a-half more days and he would be standing on Indian soil. A bright light flashed towards the ship across the water and a launch came alongside, bearing the agent of the company.

He had the latest telegrams in his hand.

'Any trouble on the Frontier?' Linforth asked.

'None,' the agent replied, and Linforth's fever of impatience was assuaged. If trouble were threatening he would surely be in time—since there were only three and a-half more days.

But he did not know why he had been brought out from England and the three and a-half days made him by just three and a-half days too late. For on this very night when the steamer stopped to coal in Aden harbour Shere Ali made his choice.

He was present that evening at a prize-fight which took place in a music-hall at Calcutta. The light-weight champion of Singapore and the East, a Jew, was pitted against a young soldier who had secured his discharge and had just taken to boxing as a profession. The soldier brought a great reputation as an amateur. This was his first appearance as a professional, and his friends had gathered in numbers to encourage him. The hall was crowded with soldiers from the barracks, sailors from the fleet, and patrons of the fancy in Calcutta. The heat was overpowering, the audience noisy, and overhead the electric fans, which hung downwards from the ceiling, whirled above the spectators with so swift a rotation that those looking up saw only a vague blur in the air. The ring had been roped off upon the stage, and about three sides of the ring chairs for the privileged had been placed. The fourth side was open to the spectators in the hall, and behind the ropes at the back there sat in the centre of the row of chairs a fat red-faced man in evening-dress who was greeted on all sides as Colonel Joe. 'Colonel Joe' was the referee, and a person on these occasions of great importance.

There were several preliminary contests and before each one Colonel Joe came to the front and introduced the combatants with a short history of their achievements. A Hindu boy was matched against a white one, a couple of wrestlers came next, and then two English sailors, with more spirit than skill, had a set-to which warmed the audience into enthusiasm and ended amid shouts, whistles, shrill cat-calls, and thunders of applause. Meanwhile the heat grew more and more intense, the faces shinier, the air more and more smoke-laden and heavy.

Shere Ali came on to the stage while the sailors were at work. He exchanged a nod with 'Colonel Joe,' and took his seat in the front row of chairs behind the ropes.

It was a rough gathering on the whole, though there were some

men in evening-dress besides Colonel Joe, and of these two sat beside Shere Ali. They were talking together, and Shere Ali at the first paid no heed to them. The trainers, the backers, the pugilists themselves were the men who had become his associates in Calcutta. There were many of them present upon the stage, and in turn they approached Shere Ali and spoke to him with familiarity upon the chances of the fight. Yet in their familiarity there was a kind of deference. They were speaking to a patron. Moreover there was some flattery in the attention with which they waited to catch his eye and the eagerness with which they came at once to his side.

'We are all glad to see you, sir,' said a small man who had been a jockey until he was warned off the turf.

'Yes,' said Shere Ali with a smile, 'I am among friends.'

'Now who would you say was going to win this fight?' continued the jockey, cocking his head with an air of shrewdness, which said as plainly as words, 'You are the one to tell if you will only say.'

Shere Ali expanded. Deference and flattery, however gross, so long as they came from white people were balm to his wounded vanity. The weeks in Calcutta had worked more harm than Ralston had suspected. Shy of meeting those who had once treated him as an equal, imagining when he did meet them that now they only admitted him to their company on sufferance and held him in their thoughts of no account, he had become avid for recognition among the riff-raff of the town.

'I have backed the man from Singapore,' he replied, 'I know him. The soldier is a stranger to me'; and gradually as he talked the voices of his two neighbours forced themselves upon his consciousness. It was not what they said which caught his attention. But their accents and the pitch of their voices arrested him, and swept him back to his days at Eton and at Oxford. He turned his head and looked carelessly towards them. They were both young; both a year ago might have been his intimates and friends. As it was, he imagined bitterly, they probably resented his sitting even in the next chair to them.

The stage was now clear; the two sailors had departed, the audience sat waiting for the heroes of the evening and calling for them with impatient outbursts of applause. Shere Ali waited too. But there was no impatience on his part, as there was no enthusiasm. He was just getting through the evening; and this hot and crowded

den with its glitter of lights promised a thrill of excitement which would for a moment lift him from the torture of his thoughts.

But the antagonists still lingered in their dressing-rooms while their trainers put the final touch to their preparations. And while the antagonists lingered, the two young men next to him began again to talk, and this time the words fell on Shere Ali's ears.

'I think it ought to be stopped,' said one. 'It can't be good for us. Of course the fellow who runs the circus doesn't care, although he is an Englishman and although he must have understood what was being shouted.'

'He is out for money, of course,' replied the other.

'Yes. But not half a mile away, just across the Maidan there, is Government House. Surely it ought to be stopped.'

The speaker was evidently serious. He spoke, indeed, with some heat. Shere Ali wondered indifferently what it was that went on in the circus in the Maidan half a mile from the Government House. Something which ought to be stopped, something which could not be 'good for us.' Shere Ali clenched his hands in a gust of passion. How well he knew the phrase! Good for us, good for the magic of British prestige! How often he had used the words himself in the days when he had been fool enough to believe that he belonged to the white people. He had used it in the company of just such youths as those who sat next to him now, and he writhed in his seat as he imagined how they must have laughed at him in their hearts. What was it that was not 'good for us' in the circus on the Maidan?

As he wondered there was a burst of applause, and on the opposite side of the ring the soldier, stripped to the waist, entered with his two assistants. Shere Ali was sitting close to the lower corner of the ring on the right-hand side of the stage; the soldier took his seat in the upper corner on the other side. He was a big, heavily-built man, but young, active, and upon his open face he had a look of confidence. It seemed to Shere Ali that he had been trained to the very perfection of his strength, and when he moved the muscles upon his shoulders and back worked under his skin as though they lived. Shouts greeted him, shouts in which his surname and his Christian name and his nicknames were mingled, and he smiled pleasantly back at his friends. Shere Ali looked at him. From his cheery, honest face to the firm set of his feet upon the floor, he was typical of his class and race.

'Oh, I hope he'll be beaten!'

Shere Ali found himself repeating the words in a whisper. The wish had suddenly sprung up within him, but it grew in intensity; it became a great longing. He looked anxiously for the appearance of the Jew from Singapore. He was glad that, knowing little of either man, he had laid his money against the soldier.

Meanwhile the two youths beside him resumed their talk, and Shere Ali learned what it was that was not 'good for us'!

'There were four girls,' said the youth who had been most indignant. 'Four English girls dancing a *pas de quatre* on the sand of the circus. The dance was all right, the dresses were all right. In an English theatre no one would have had a word to say. It was the audience that was wrong. The cheaper parts at the back of the tent were crowded with natives, tier above tier—and I tell you—I don't know much Hindustani, but the things they shouted made my blood boil. After all, if you are going to be the governing race it's not a good thing to let your women be insulted, eh?'

Shere Ali laughed quietly. He could picture to himself the whole scene, the floor of the circus, the tiers of grinning faces rising up against the back walls of the tent.

'Did the girls themselves mind?' asked the other of the youths.

'They didn't understand.' And again the angry utterance followed. 'It ought to be stopped! It ought to be stopped!'

Shere Ali turned suddenly upon the speaker.

'Why?' he asked fiercely, and he thrust a savage face towards him.

The young man was taken by surprise; for a second it warmed Shere Ali to think that he was afraid. And, indeed, there was very little of the civilised man in Shere Ali's look at this moment. His own people were claiming him. It was one of the keen grim tribesmen of the hills who challenged the young Englishman. The Englishman, however, was not afraid. He was merely disconcerted by the unexpected attack. He recovered his composure the next moment.

'I don't think that I was speaking to you,' he said quietly, and then turned away.

Shere Ali half rose in his seat. But he was not yet quite emancipated from the traditions of his upbringing. To create a disturbance in a public place, to draw all eyes upon himself, to look a fool, eventually to be turned ignominiously into the street—



all this he was within an ace of doing and suffering, but he refrained. He sat down again quickly, feeling hot and cold with shame, just as he remembered he had been wont to feel when he had committed some gaucherie in his early days in England.

At that moment the light-weight champion from Singapore came out from his dressing-room and entered the ring. He was of a slighter build than his opponent, but very quick upon his feet. He was shorter, too. Colonel Joe introduced the antagonists to the audience, standing before the footlights as he did so. And it was at once evident who was the favourite. The shouts were nearly all for the soldier.

The Jew took his seat in a chair down in the corner where Shere Ali was sitting, and Shere Ali leaned over the ropes and whispered to him fiercely.

‘Win! Win! I’ll double the stake if you do!’

The Jew turned and smiled at the young Prince.

‘I’ll do my best.’

Shere Ali leaned back in his chair and the fight began. He followed it with an excitement and a suspense which were astonishing even to him. When the soldier brought his fist home upon the prominent nose of the Singapore champion and plaudits resounded through the house, his heart sank with bitter disappointment. When the Jew replied with a dull body-blow, his hopes rebounded. He soon began to understand that in the arts of prize-fighting the soldier was a child compared with the man from Singapore. The Champion of the East knew his trade. He was as hard as iron. The sounding blows upon his forehead and nose did no more than flush his face for a few moments. Meanwhile he struck for the body. Moreover he had certain tricks which lured his antagonist to an imprudent confidence. For instance, he breathed heavily from the beginning of the second round, as though he were clean out of condition. But each round found him strong and quick to press an advantage. After one blow, which toppled his opponent through the ropes, Shere Ali clapped his hands.

‘Bravo!’ he cried; and one of the youths at his side said to his companion:

‘This fellow’s a Jew, too. Look at his face.’

For twelve rounds the combatants seemed still to be upon equal terms, though those in the audience who had knowledge began to shake their heads over the chances of the soldier. Shere Ali, however, was still racked by suspense. The fight had become a

symbol, almost a message to him, even as his gift to the Mullah had become a message to the people of Chiltistan. All that he had once loved, and now furiously raged against, was represented by the soldier, the confident, big, heavily built soldier, while, on the other hand, by the victory of the Jew all the subject peoples would be vindicated. More and more as the fight fluctuated from round to round the people and the country of Chiltistan claimed its own. The soldier represented even those youths at his side, whose women must on no account be insulted.

‘Why should they be respected?’ he cried to himself.

For at the bottom of his heart lay the thought he had been set aside as impossible by Phyllis Oliver. There was the real cause of his bitterness against the white people. He still longed for Phyllis Oliver, still greatly coveted her. But his own people and his own country were claiming him; and he longed for her in a different way. Chivalry—the chivalry of the young man who wants to guard and cherish—respect, the desire that the loved one should share ambitions, life work, all—what follies and illusions these things were!

‘I know,’ said Shere Ali to himself. ‘I know. I am myself the victim of them,’ and he lowered his head and clasped his hands tightly together between his knees. He forgot the prize-fight, the very sound of the pugilists’ feet upon the bare boards of the stage ceased to be audible to his ears. He ached like a man bruised and beaten; he was possessed with a sense of loneliness, poignant as pain. ‘If I had only taken the easier way, bought and never cared!’ he cried despairingly. ‘But at all events there’s no need for respect. Why should one respect those who take and do not give?’

As he asked himself the question, there came a roar from the audience. He looked up. The soldier was standing, but he was stooping and the fingers of one hand touched the boards. Over against the soldier the man from Singapore stood waiting with steady eyes, and behind the ropes Colonel Joe was counting in a loud voice:

‘One, two, three, four.’

Shere Ali’s eyes lit up. Would the soldier rise? Would he take the tips of those fingers from the floor, stand up again and face his man? Or was he beaten?

‘Five, six, seven, eight’—the referee counted, his voice rising above the clamour of voices. The audience had risen, men stood

upon their benches, cries of expostulation were shouted to the soldier.

'Nine, ten,' counted the referee, and the fight was over. The soldier had been counted out.

Shere Ali was upon his feet like the rest of the enthusiasts.

'Well done!' he cried. 'Well done!' and as the Jew came back to his corner Shere Ali shook him excitedly by the hand. The sign had been given; the subject race had beaten the soldier. Shere Ali was livid with excitement. Perhaps, indeed, the young Englishman had been right, and some dim racial sympathy stirred Shere Ali to his great enthusiasm.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### SHERE ALI IS CLAIMED BY CHILTISTAN.

WHILE these thoughts were seething in his mind, while the excitement was still at its height, the cries still at their loudest, Shere Ali heard a quiet penetrating voice speak in his ear. And the voice spoke in Pushtu.

The mere sound of the language struck upon Shere Ali's senses at that moment of exultation with a strange effect. He thrilled to it from head to foot. He heard it with a feeling of joy. And then he took note of the spoken words.

'The man who wrote to your Highness from Calcutta waits outside the doors. As you stand under the gas lamps, take your handkerchief from your pocket if you wish to speak with him.'

Shere Ali turned back from the ropes. But the spectators were already moving from their chairs to the steps which led from the stage to the auditorium. There was a crowd about those steps, and Shere Ali could not distinguish among it the man who was likely to have whispered in his ear. All seemed bent upon their own business, and that business was to escape from the close heat-laden air of the building as quickly as might be.

Shere Ali stood alone and pondered upon the words. The man who had written to him from Calcutta! That was the man who had sent the anonymous letter which had caused him one day to pass through the Delhi Gate of Lahore. A moneylender at Calcutta, but a country man from Chiltistan. So he had gathered from Safdar Ali, while heaping scorn upon the message.

But now, and on this night of all nights, Shere Ali was in a mood to listen. There were intrigues on foot—there were always intrigues on foot. But to-night he would weigh those intrigues. He went out from the music-hall, and under the white glare of the electric lamps above the door he stood for a moment in full view. Then he deliberately took his handkerchief from his pocket. From the opposite side of the road, a man in native dress, wearing a thick dark cloak over his thin white shirt and pyjamas, stepped forward. Shere Ali advanced to meet him.

‘Huzoor, huzoor,’ said the man, bending low, and he raised Shere Ali’s hand and pressed his forehead upon it, in sign of loyalty.

‘You wish to speak to me,’ said Shere Ali.

‘If your Highness will deign to follow. I am Ahmed Ismail. Your Highness has heard of me, no doubt.’

Shere Ali did not so much as smile, nor did he deny the statement. He nodded gravely. After all vanity was not the prerogative of his people alone in all the world.

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘I will follow.’

Ahmed Ismail crossed the road once more out of the lights into the shadows, and walked on, keeping close to the lines of houses. Shere Ali followed upon his heels. But these two were not alone to take that road. A third man, a Bengali, bespectacled and in appearance most respectable, came down the steps of the music hall, a second after Shere Ali had crossed the road. He too had been a witness of the prize fight. He hurried after Shere Ali and caught him up.

‘Very good fight, sir,’ he said. ‘Would Prince of Chiltistan like to utter some few welcome words to great Indian public on extraordinary skill of respective pugilists? I am full-fledged reporter of *Bande Mataram*, great Nationalist paper.’

He drew out a note-book and a pencil as he spoke. Ahmed Ismail stopped and turned back towards the two men. The Babu looked once, and only once, at the moneylender. Then he stood waiting for Shere Ali’s answer.

‘No, I have nothing to say,’ said Shere Ali civilly. ‘Good-night,’ and he walked on.

‘Great disappointment for Indian public,’ said the Bengali. ‘Prince of Chiltistan will say nothing. I make first-class leading article on reticence of Indian Prince in presence of high-class spectacular events. Good-night, sir,’ and the Babu shut up his book, and fell back.

Shere Ali followed upon the heels of Ahmed Ismail. The money-lender walked down the street to the Maidan, and then turned to the left. The Babu, on the other hand, hailed a third-class gharry and, ascending into it, gave the driver some whispered instructions.

The gharry drove on past the Bengal club, and came, at length, to the native town. At the corner of a street the Babu descended, paid the driver, and dismissed him.

'I will walk the rest of the way,' he said. 'My home is quite near and a little exercise is good. I have large varicose veins in the legs, or I should have tramped hand and foot all the way.'

He walked slowly until the driver had turned his gharry and was driving back. Then, for a man afflicted with varicose veins the Babu displayed amazing agility. He ran through the silent and deserted street until he came to a turning. The lane which ran into the main road was a blind alley. Mean hovels and shuttered booths flanked it, but at the end a tall house stood. The Babu looked about him and perceived a cart standing in the lane. He advanced to it and looked in.

'This is obvious place for satisfactory concealment,' he said, as with some difficulty he clambered in. Over the edge of the cart he kept watch. In a while he heard the sound of a man walking. The man was certainly at some distance from the turning, but the Babu's head went down at once. The man whose footsteps he heard was wearing boots, but there would be one walking in front of that man who was wearing slippers—Ahmed Ismail.

Ahmed Ismail indeed turned an instant afterwards into the lane, passed the cart and walked up to the door of the big house. There he halted, and Shere Ali joined him.

'The gift was understood, your Highness,' he said. 'The message was sent from end to end of Chiltistan.'

'What gift?' asked Shere Ali, in a genuine surprise.

'Your Highness has forgotten? The melons and the bags of grain.'

Shere Ali was silent for a few moments. Then he said:

'And how was the gift interpreted?'

Ahmed Ismail smiled in the darkness.

'There are wise men in Chiltistan, and they found the riddle easy to read. The melons were the infidels which would be cut to pieces, even as a knife cuts a melon. The grain was the army of the faithful.'

Again Shere Ali was silent. He stood with his eyes upon his companion.

'Thus they understood my gift to the Mullah?' he said at length.

'Thus they understood it,' said Ahmed Ismail. 'Were they wrong?' and since Shere Ali paused before he answered, Ahmed repeated the question, holding the while the key of his door between his fingers.

'Were they wrong, your Highness?'

'No,' said Shere Ali firmly. 'They were right.'

Ahmed Ismail put the key into the lock. The bolt shot back with a grating sound, the door opened upon blackness.

'Will your Highness deign to enter,' he said, standing aside.

'Yes,' said Shere Ali, and he passed in. His own people, his own country, had claimed and obtained him.

*(To be continued.)*

## *A GIRL OF THE REFORM BILL.*

BY S. G. TALLENTYRE.

At a time when the extension of the franchise to women is a burning question—if not an imminent reality—it is curious to reflect that it was but a very few years before the accession of Queen Victoria that the extension of the franchise to men, beyond the men of the privileged classes, excited the fiercest political agitation of modern times; while all women quietly accepted the doctrine of their own political and mental incapacity and, with one of the most clever and sensible of their sex, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, did not doubt ‘that God and nature have thrown us into an inferior rank; we are a lower part of the creation; . . . and any woman who suffers her vanity and folly to deny this, rebels against the law of her Creator and the indisputable order of Nature.’

Yet it would be a great mistake to think that such women—who were girls of sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, at the time of the Reform Bill—were not often of strong character, great influence, and excellent intelligence; or that they can be at all justly dismissed as all Sandals, Sentiment, and Softness.

There died, only the other day, aged ninety-two, one whose simple history should not only recall ‘the tender grace of a day that is dead,’ but should help to prove that the girl of the Reform Bill was sometimes wiser and better balanced, and in her narrower scope not less useful, than her granddaughter of to-day.

Out of Great Tower Street, in the City of London, quite close to the Tower itself and to the narrow alley called Water Lane, the passer-by may see an archway with the words ‘Fowkes Buildings’ above it in faint letters. ‘Buildings’ now suggest model dwellings for the poor. In 1832 these particular buildings were composed of excellent, sober Georgian houses, with flat, regular faces. Many of the houses have been improved from the face of the earth. But there yet remains one, that communicated, and still communicates, with the offices of a firm of wine merchants, which



open into Water Lane. Here, still intact, are some of the comfortable wood-panelled rooms, old carved mantelpieces and a fine staircase. It is possible even now, when great business houses have been built up all round and make those rooms dark and gloomy and when the fierce roar of modern London dins in on the ear, to fancy that, in an earlier world, with their proper share of air and light, with the London without a comparatively small and tranquil place and the thunderous rumble of Great Tower Street only a busy and not disturbing hum, Fowkes Buildings might not have been an unrestful place to live in.

Hard by them were other Georgian houses, occupied by City merchants or solicitors. Here was a church by Wren, with much black oak, a gallery, a three-decker pulpit, and charity girls in tippets and caps; and there the City rector, portly and well-to-do—the only bridge by which the merchant class stepped into the professional, and a bridge it did not so very often cross. For in those simpler days the great wholesale tradesmen lived, as small retail tradesmen do now, over or next door to their place of business, formed a society of their own, made their work their pride as well as their livelihood, and were not the least honourable and honoured, respected and self-respecting class of the community.

Mr. James Dale was the founder and the head of that firm of wine merchants in Water Lane which so conveniently adjoined his own house in Fowkes Buildings, where he lived with Madam his wife, and their five daughters. In 1832 he was a very fine, handsome, dignified man, some fifty years old, with his hair already white. In the business he had built up he was at once exceedingly shrewd and successful and exceedingly honest. In the long letters he wrote to his children—and people wrote very long letters then, and used all the longest words they could think of—he shows himself evenly tenderly affectionate; and to his wife he was staunchly and admiringly devoted.

Madam was something sterner and austerer than he was. Only forty years old, she had accepted that age, as women did then, as old age almost. Her beauty—a fine and stately beauty—had outlived her interest in it, and she was wholly absorbed in her vocation of wife and mother. If her children feared her first and loved her after, they did love and reverence her to the last breath of their own great old age. With that unselfish, but unwise, class of modern parent, whose whole aim seems to be to give its children a happy childhood, Madam had little in common. To

build up, correct, form the characters of her daughters so that they should be noble and useful women was her larger endeavour.

At the head of the group was Arabella, tall, pretty, and, though she had been firmly brought up to think that favour is deceitful and beauty is vain, just a little proud of that prettiness. Next came Julia, of twenty-one, highly intelligent, acquisitive, inquisitive, with her curls always escaping their side combs and shaking over a very enquiring face; then Louisa, of nineteen, delicate, and consequently always being sheltered from the robust life which might have made her robust too; Pollie, the most high-spirited and engaging romp; and lastly Betty, at the time of the Reform Bill, just seventeen.

Someone painted a miniature of Betty in her wedding gown seven years later—for this poor Betty was positively an old maid until she was four and twenty. It represents a little creature, very sweet and spry, with dark, soft curls, a dimpled neck, and very blue eyes, as bright as a bird's. Plenty of mother wit had Betty; and an excellent fund of sense, wholly independent of learning. Betty would have been a practical and resourceful girl in Eden: just as she was the kindest and most benevolent little creature in a coral, at eight years old, and with really no scope for benevolence, and the kindest and most benevolent of rich, influential old women at eighty.

Full, from first to last, of household tasks and sober good deeds, yet, at the simplest amusements, whether in her fresh and innocent youth, or in an old age scarcely less fresh and innocent, it was always Betty's happy laugh that rang out first and clearest. To think of her is to think still of perfect equipoise and health, of the homeliest simple virtues; and her memory brings back, not the faint, sweet scent of flowers, but the sound, clean fragrance of thyme and mint growing—for use.

Her girlish life was certainly a sterner thing than is a girl's life to-day. On her own testimony, it was a happy one. At six in summer and seven in winter, Madam's daughters left their exquisitely neat bedrooms, in which, even in the severest weather, a fire would have been considered a superfluity of naughtiness indeed.

In the panelled schoolroom, beautifully clean and polished, but rather cold, and sometimes with candles to light the murky London morning, Madam gave her daughters a Bible class. If she was not strong in theology, she was very strong in character,

which is a great deal better. Her five listened very gravely. To be sure, when the kitten burst into the room with a loud mew in the midst of Habakkuk, Pollie laughed outright, and Betty would have liked to. But, for the most part, the five pairs of eyes were fixed very seriously on Madam's face: although Betty was not sorry that it was her duty to snuff the mould candles, or that such candles were constantly in need of snuffing.

Mr. Dale was always awaiting the party and the eight o'clock breakfast in the dining-room. Breakfast was not at all the casual and silent—shall one say the cross?—meal it often is now. With the Dales at least it was full of interest. Pollie had helped the parlourmaid to polish the heavy, solid silver; Julia had darned a weak place in the exquisite linen tablecloth so beautifully that Madam was as proud of the mend as of the beauty of the damask itself; and even Papa, who, manlike, was no judge of darns, was made to understand that to have a darner in the family such as Julia was a thing glorious and rare. Betty had made the marmalade with exactly the right oranges, at exactly the psychological moment the prudent housekeeper *does* make marmalade; Arabella was responsible for the jam; while the large ham at the end of the table—originally arrived as pig from Mr. Dale's farm in Sussex—had received so much attention in the way of curing, smoking and hanging, as to have become in some sort a personal friend of the family.

After breakfast, the three maids (they also had been imported at one time or other, like the ham, from the farm in the country) trooped in to prayers. Mr. Dale read a chapter of the Bible, with his handsome, fresh-coloured face bent over the good book devoutly, and then a long, long prayer. The flippant modern mind might certainly criticise that prayer as being little more than a series of commands and statements—all put so very clearly and specifically as to suggest that Providence was rather stupid and the suppliant perfectly determined there should be no mistakes. But Madam's face—Madam knelt at the head of her flock—was only calm and reverent: and in the fly-leaf of that old brown prayer-book there is written now, in her fine, clear hand and faded ink, 'a good little Book.'

Arabella and Julia, whose education was finished, spent the morning busy in kitchen and household mysteries with their mother. A Miss Pring, spinster and faded, chosen chiefly for the excellence of her morals and the impecuniosity of her circumstances, then

arrived to teach Louisa, Pollie and Betty all she knew herself. It was not much, certainly. But in that rather dark schoolroom—those were the days of the window-tax—Miss Pring somehow managed to give Julia a sufficient foundation of learning for her to find, later, the solace for many troubles in books and study; while Betty—who was all her life a little of the opinion that reading was slightly waste of a practical person's time—at least learnt admirably how to keep accounts and the finest of all literary styles—to say what one has to say in the most direct, clear, and simple phraseology. As for Louisa—poor Louisa's delicate back used to ache so dreadfully from sitting on the hard, straight-backed chairs to which the Young Female was condemned in those days (Betty used to say there was not a single easy-chair in her father's house until 1837), that Miss Pring, who was as kind as she was ignorant in matters of health, permitted a solid, Berlin wool-worked cushion to be fetched from the drawing-room for the invalid's easing and comfort.

At about twelve, book-learning was over for the day, and the whole party had the lightest lunch of cake and biscuits in the dining-room, while Mr. Dale had a glass of brown, brown sherry and a sandwich in the counting-house.

Then Madam and the two eldest girls joined the rest of the party in the schoolroom, and they all sat down solidly to needlework. It is the fashion now to laugh at those endless seams and stitcheries, and to make perfectly certain that the young woman of to-day is always and inevitably much more wholesomely and sensibly employed. It may indeed be admitted that it would have been better for Betty and her sisters if they had been allowed sometimes to exchange their needlework for a brisk walk or an out-of-door game; but, after all, is it so much worse for the health, or so much more useless, to spend one's time at embroidery than at bridge? The people who attribute the foolish terrors and faintings, the *migraines* and headaches of the girl of the Reform Bill to her indoor life and excessive domesticity are right, no doubt; but they forget that the much more serious nervous diseases to which they are themselves subject were wholly unknown to her: and that it was not for the benefit of *her* nerves that rest-cures and sleeping draughts were invented.

It is, too, sometimes forgotten that this cult of the needle was really interesting to the workers.

In Betty's home, as Betty recalled with a charming pride many

years later, everything that could be done by themselves was so done. From the time they were quite little girls, it was Madam's stern, wise rule, that she and their father accepted no present from them which was not entirely the work of their own hands. A house in which their busy fingers had made not only the fal-lals, but the curtains and chair-covers, in which Julia's darns were beautifully conspicuous on the table linen, and Louisa's delicate embroidery on the pole-screens, may well have been a home in a sense in which rooms furnished by the yard from a shop can scarcely be.

There was much, too, in the house, besides the needlework, for which the girls were proudly responsible.

After Miss Pring had left, a drawing-master—Madam, of course, personally chaperoned his lessons, though he was fifty-six and had broken his nose in a fall from a stage-coach—imparted his art to the Misses Dale.

That the drawing-masters of the period touched up their pupil's work so lavishly, may account partly, but not entirely, for the fact that in those days every woman seems to have been able to draw passing well. It is certain that the pen and ink likenesses Arabella did of her sisters—with their sloping shoulders, low-necked frocks, bunches of curls, and bright, clever eyes—are full of spirit and resemblance; and Pollie's copy of 'The Age of Innocence'—done when she was herself still at an innocent age—is unmistakably competent. Betty used to have a little governess to teach her a long-dead accomplishment—wax flower making. When she was eighty, she would still trot stoutly sometimes of an evening to an old cabinet to look at the roses and camellias her cool, firm little hands had modelled into a quite astonishing likeness of nature.

Madam herself taught her daughters to sing and play; and a master, again sternly chaperoned, instructed Arabella on the harp.

By the time dinner came, at four o'clock, the whole family may be said to have earned it well. People took their meals much more seriously and at much greater length than they do now. It was quite six o'clock before Mr. Dale left his wine and the table—himself the most abstemious of men, he had in early life been neither shocked nor surprised to leave many of his friends helpless underneath it—and joined Madam and his children for tea in the drawing-room. There, when Madam had made the tea herself

out of the tortoiseshell tea-caddy with its lock and key, and Phoebe had brought in the muffins and the hot buttered toast, and finally cleared away the fine china and silver, Mr. Dale read aloud to the party while they knitted or embroidered. Betty remembered very well all her life that no such frivolity as a work of fiction was ever permitted to her or her sisters. Perhaps that was why, when she was an old woman, the simplest of romances gave her a gay, girlish delight. But when she *was* a girl, even Miss Austen was considered likely to unsettle the mind of the Young Person, and that cheap, easy road to knowledge—the historical novel—would have been considered a most culpable laziness. No, no! There was no more firmly rooted conviction in that age—and it was the age of strong convictions—than that it was impossible to be informed and entertained at the same time. So Mr. Dale, looking over his very high stock through his spectacles, read aloud a ‘History of the Thirty Years War’ in five volumes—while Madam went on with her plans and thoughts for her daughters’ future, Arabella dreamt of the young man who that very morning had asked her hand of Papa, Betty absorbed her soul in the delicate intricacies of the lace she was mending, Pollie hoped against hope for an interruption in the shape of a mouse, or the kitten again, and clever Julia really listened and learnt.

Afterwards they sang glees together: or Arabella played on the harp: or Betty, who had a very sweet, true, clear little voice, sang those sentimental ballads with many verses, amazing trills in the treble and shaking chords in the bass, which were the fashion of that day. The quaint, dark-panelled drawing-room of Fowkes Buildings, lit by candles in great silver sconces, with its old china in cabinets, the opened piano—a piano which had only just grown out of being a harpsichord—and the girls with their white muslin frocks, sandal shoes, and fresh, rose-petal faces, must have made a pretty picture enough.

No foolishly flattering or selfishly devoted parents could have been prouder of their nosegay of daughters than were these parents, whose steadfast endeavour it was to have their children not lovely, but in the best and noblest sense, lovable.

At nine there came a light supper—there had been time to grow hungry since a six o’clock tea—then prayers and another Bible reading; and by half-past ten Fowkes Buildings was calmly and respectably asleep.

It may be observed that in this ordinary week-day life there was



absolutely no place left for outdoor exercise, and very little for what may be called holiday-making.

In point of fact, the girls never went out for air and the good of their health, as all girls are made to do now. A very rare stroll on very rare occasions, in their thin little slippers, in the gardens of the Tower they did remember taking, and also an occasional pilgrimage to St. Paul's Churchyard to buy a ribbon. But that was all. How, with but one exception, they grew from a happy and healthy girlhood to a vigorous old age on a *régime* from which oxygen was practically excluded is a mystery, whose solution must be left to the modern preacher of hygiene.

As for holidays, Betty, herself the most industrious of working bees, confessed she had far too few. Except on Sundays, Christmas Day and Good Friday, Miss Pring was always in attendance. When Mr. Dale took a country house for the summer months at Tooting or at Islington, their masters daily pursued the girls to those (then) rural shades. Sometimes, indeed, brain-work was entirely suspended in order that an uninterrupted day might be devoted to needle-work. It must also be taken into consideration that that brain-work, if constant, was mild; and that Miss Pring and her pupils were not haunted by the demon Competition, or by the thought of an examination of any kind or description.

Then, if they knew few holidays, they did have some recreations. There were balls—not very many, but very long, and very much enjoyed, with all the vigour of the fresh new century in the dancers' hearts and heels.

Much more often than balls, there were dinner-parties at home. On these occasions, all lessons were abandoned, and Miss Pring and all Madam's five devoted themselves the whole day long to the domestic and the culinary.

Between them, and the three maids, they brought the house to a state of polish and fragrance marvellous to see and scent. From the neatest of store-cupboards Madam produced wax candles, at three or four shillings a pound, to replace the mould ones in general use. Betty covered her neat little person from head to foot with a white apron, and with the dark curls falling over her neck, enjoyed herself enormously in helping to prepare a dinner which embraced dishes so many and so complicated that their very names would cause a modern cook to give notice on the spot. On one of these occasions, Betty, with a burst of genius, invented a pudding—and has handed down the recipe as an heirloom to her descendants.



When the guests—three fat aldermanic City couples—arrived at four o'clock, the girls were awaiting them in their best bibs and tuckers—modest, fresh, and virginal, and quite as ready and competent to sing and play in the evening as they had been to polish and cook in the morning.

As for the dinner, with its large silver epergne in the middle of the table, filled with trifle instead of flowers, as an ornament—the dinner, with its various soups and fish, flanks, removes, entrées, creams, sweets, jellies, salads and cheeses—its very thought makes the modern degenerate dyspeptic. If Madam and the girls partook of only a few of the dishes, they took a simple pride in every one. Mr. Dale carved: and did his neighbour, the Alderman's lady, admire the vast sirloin or the calf's head he was tackling, that was quite *de rigueur* and everybody felt pleased. Once—one fatal day, always memorable in the family annals—the little cook-maid who had been trusted to make the lobster sauce for the turbot, omitted the lobsters. Perhaps in such a sweet spirit as Betty's it would be too much to say that those lobsters rankled till the day of her death; but it is certainly true that, at nearly ninety, she puckered her pretty old forehead at the thought of them, and shook her head across three parts of a century at the cook-maid, as a naughty and a careless girl.

The festal evening ended with a game of Pope Joan, at which, if one only played long enough, it was possible to lose or win the delirious sum of ninepence, or thereabouts. Betty used to count out the counters, arrange the board and the table, and then stand and watch the game very earnestly, with her hand on Papa's shoulder—Papa being sumptuous this evening in a stock of black satin and a fine brocaded waistcoat.

Sundays could scarcely come under the head of recreation, being, as Betty said, 'much better kept than they are now.' At ten minutes to eleven in the morning, the five Miss Dales, in five Dunstable straw bonnets and five puce silk pelisses, and carrying five sums for the offertory, which were the result of five separate acts of self-denial, left Fowkes Buildings for the Church of St. Dunstan's in the East, quite close by.

One can still see in that fine old church the square pew, on the left-hand side of the great reading desk (as one looks towards the altar), where the five girls and their parents sat facing each other, retaining that exceedingly trying position without a smile through a service inordinately long and droning. Betty, from her corner,

which commanded a view of the west end and of the gallery, managed somehow to attend most devoutly to the service, and yet to have a brisk knowledge of the bonnets of the rest of the congregation, and to be quite aware of who was in church, and who ought to have been, but was not. There was another long service in the afternoon. Then, after a dinner which was solemnised to Sunday by damson cheese, which never appeared on secular occasions, the girls read good books in the drawing-room, and Papa finished evening prayers and the day with a long, long, clever, dull sermon.

It may be observed that it is generally the people who would least dream of keeping them themselves, who are the most irked and chagrined by strict rules for the observance of Sunday in others. Betty and her sister remembered the Sundays of their youth kindly and happily enough; to those of their old age there clung always something of a calm and serious piety, of detachment from the week and the world, far from displeasing.

The little alms, in their little cotton gloves, to put in the alms-dish at St. Dunstan's, were not by any means their sole charities. There is nothing of which this age is more conceited than the quality and quantity of its philanthropy. Certainly, in that one, few people realised how much harm they did by doing good; but, on the other hand, as a corrective to this ignorance, most of them were imbued with the good old Tory doctrine that if Providence had made persons poor, it meant them to remain so. Madam certainly knew how to keep the lower orders in their proper places; but she and all her daughters practised, all the same, the finest, highest and most troublesome kind of benevolence—that of giving knowledge. Once a week, twelve little bobbing charity girls came to Fowkes Buildings, and were instructed by Madam, by Arabella, and by Betty in religion, plain sewing, and a rigidly economical cookery. Not one of those teachers had any of that lazy and sentimental tolerance for bad work which is the besetting vice of our own philanthropy and the sure ruin of the worker.

Practical Betty, on her own account, had a little class of infant urchins on Thursdays, whom she seriously taught how to darn socks and sew on buttons, in view of a future when their path in life might take them away from sisters and wives. If the urchins slipped off the little stools on which they sat—being at the slippery stage of infancy they often did—Betty picked them up and replaced them; if they wanted shaking, she shook them; and if

they were grubby, she soaped them. Pollie and Louisa clothed a whole orphan with the needlework of their hands ; and if the orphan made mistakes in her orthography in her letter of thanks, Madam always wrote and pointed them out to her.

Julia gave a yearly prize to the neatest personal appearance in the Ward School connected with St. Dunstan's : and Julia's eye for espying untidiness was as bright as it was conscientious.

The first break in that happy home circle came when Louisa developed consumption, and died of the treatment. Madam took her to Ventnor, and Mr. Dale sent after her four dozen of porter—poor Louisa!—from the great cellars in Water Lane. All the family letters and journals of that time—each girl kept her journal—bear witness to the invalid's pathetic craving for fresh air, and to the devoted and untiring tenderness of her parents in keeping it from her. She soon drooped and died—an exquisite snowdrop on a very frail stem ; and lies now in that black and disused graveyard of St. Dunstan's, just out of the turmoil of Tower Street. But after a day so innocent, wherever her bed be made, her sleep may well be sound and sweet.

Madam and her husband took up their life again with a noble resignation and cheerfulness, and devoted it to the children who remained to them. Mr. Dale began now to interview likely young gentlemen in the counting-house ; to weigh their characters and their prospects in the paternal scales, as it were, and see if they came up to the proper weight of sons-in-law. The fact that his system was generally successful is not any more an argument against Natural Selection than the fact that his girls were healthy with so little air and exercise can be taken as proof of the uselessness of those valuables.

Even that tenderest and most painstaking of fathers was at least once at fault. The young merchant who married Julia certainly seemed everything that was worthy and respectable. But in that day, man set the standard of morality for both sexes ; and forgave himself much. If Julia was not happy, even her parents only suspected that all was not well, and her secret, if she had one, was admirably well kept, for she kept it to herself. Not the most strong-minded and resourceful of modern women could have faced her fate with a steadier courage than this little miss, or have more successfully made for herself interest and consolation in reading and study.

Arabella, very fine and lovely in white satin, was married

the next year at St. Dunstan's to a doctor, and soon had 'chubby children hanging on her neck, to keep her low and wise.' Then Papa found Pollie a fox-hunting country squire—the best of stout, good-hearted, florid young men.

As each daughter was married, Mr. Dale settled on her ten thousand pounds and a pipe of port, the port being left much at the discretion of the son-in-law, and the ten thousand pounds very securely tied up on his bride.

Betty was the only bird in the home-nest now, and in her most naïf and voluminous diary there is certainly evidence she could have left it sooner, had she liked. Once, with an aunt and cousins, she went a memorable tour in the West of England. The diary records how a certain Mr. Phipson, the friend of one of the cousins, sat by Betty all one summer's day on the top of the stage-coach, where he whispered soft nothings into her deep bonnet, while she, always diligent, netted a green silk purse to the accompaniment of those blandishments. At Hereford, when Betty rose at 6 A.M. to sketch the cathedral, Mr. Phipson happened also to have risen at that untoward hour, and to stroll through the close where sat the unchaperoned devotee of art. Certainly in Betty's album—that was the age of Albums and Keepsakes—Mr. Phipson pressed some violets and wrote some verses (really quite fluent verses, and not so very much worse than Tom Moore at his worst), in which he compared Betty's blue eyes to the flower, which they did not at all resemble. Those gay, shrewd eyes evidently saw something wanting in Mr. Phipson, for when he wrote a very respectable, tentative epistle to Papa, Betty, acquainted with its contents, laid her little, useful hand on Papa's shoulder, and said 'No' with great decision.

To be sure, neither he nor her mother wanted to part from her; but then it was not for Betty's true good that she should be allowed to be captious. So when James, who was in Hops, and a most excellent young man, with his tight trousers and blue swallow-tail coat, asked for Betty, Betty was bidden to say 'Yes.' As, by some delightful stroke of good fortune, she really wanted to, all was well. She sat down in the old schoolroom of Fowkes Buildings, and embroidered herself large, sensible, voluminous handkerchiefs, and a trousseau. Sometimes James was allowed to sit by her, and interrupt; but not too often. When he was permitted to take her a lover's walk in Tower Gardens, she always remembered how, tripping by his side, she caught sight of a wine-

stain on his light waistcoat, and disapproved seriously of a mother and sister who had neglected to remove it.

James wrote an original verse in her album, as Mr. Phipson had done, and Betty, who had no turn for poetry and privately thought it nonsense, responded by a long quotation out of Cowper in a very neat, running hand. Madam instructed Betty, as she had instructed Betty's sisters, in the Whole Duty of Woman as wife and mother. But better than any instruction, Betty had had before her all her life her parents' example.

She was married in St. Dunstan's Church—the neat, sweet Betty of the miniature—and after a solid breakfast at Fowkes Buildings, James drove her away in his phaeton—Betty being in a beautiful brown silk pelisse, with the loveliest ostrich feather curling round her bonnet—to a honeymoon and happiness.

The Reform Bill had passed, and with it passed too the old England in which Betty had been a girl. She herself kept to the end of her life many of its quaint customs and all its unhurrying spirit. From Betty and Betty's house there radiated for ever an old-world industry and contentment, sober pleasure and peace. Full always of benevolence and good deeds, her most useful benevolence was her own personality, and the first of her good deeds was her husband. Was it a case here of the grey mare being the better horse? Perhaps. But if Betty suspected it herself, she buried the suspicion in her loyal breast. It seemed to her right and happier he should die first—'he would have missed me so much.' They had never had any children. When he had left her, she filled her life yet fuller with kindnesses, not only to the poor but to the rich, and, most difficult of charities, to her own relations.

On the new order of things she lived to see grow up round her she formed opinions, not illiberal. For a young relative, who had done wonders at Girton, and was to be Science Mistress in a Technical College, pride and disapproval struggled in the old mind. Then, seeing Science produce some homely needlework one evening, Madam Betty stretched out her pretty old hand to pat Science's and said, without the faintest idea of sarcasm, 'I am glad, dear, to see you can do something useful *as well*.'

When another type of modern girl, the large, athletic young woman, of careless manners and attitudes, dedicated soul and body to sport, crossed Betty's line of vision, she sorted out the right spectacles with which to observe so strange a specimen, and looked

at her through them with a firm, long, disconcerting regard ; and when Sport was out of ear-shot, observed compassionately, ' Poor thing ! Very ill-taught and ungainly ! ' and went on with her knitting.

As the great political agitation of her youth had been the passing of the great Reform Bill, so the last political agitation of her age was the question of the enfranchisement of women.

Betty took it, as she might have been expected to take it, practically. She remembered certain occasions on which James—her eyes grew a little dim and wistful as she thought of him—had put his foot (in two senses) in her department, culinary and domestic, and saw no reason to suppose that, if she entered *his* department, political, she would come out of it more gloriously. Besides, added Betty, shaking her head a little at the thought of Sport who considered prowess in a game a full justification of her existence, when women do all their *own* duties properly, it will be time for them to think of taking up *other people's*. Only a few days later, with her firm old hand still on the helm of *her* duty, her household and her character, Betty died.

Her order of woman has given place to a new—'lest one good custom should corrupt the world.'

Yet her sisters of to-day may well see to it that, being so much more clever than she was, they are as wise : that in their eagerness for political power and usefulness, they contribute as well as she did to the happiness and right conduct of the home : and that they always remember that no *rôle* assigned to them by an Act of Parliament can have the high and infinite importance, or the momentous consequences to the race, of that part which they have been called upon to play by Nature, from the creation of the world.

## AMONGST THE MUTINY CITIES OF INDIA.

I.—DELHI.

BY W. H. FITCHETT.

THE attraction that draws an Englishman to Delhi does not lie in the stately and historic palace, with its girdle of battlements and its crown of white marble ; nor in the great Cathedral Mosque, with its triple cupolas—‘ three lilies springing from a waste of mud ’—nor in the strange wilderness of dead cities to the south, with that most wonderful of all monuments—the Kutab Minar—rising like some tall mast of carved stone out of the dusty landscape. The secret of the spell the grey, rambling, and ancient city has for even the unimaginative Briton lies in the fact that it is the stage on which was set one of the most heroic scenes in the great drama of the Mutiny. What an Englishman crosses half the world to see is the Delhi of 1857 ; the city of the Cashmere Gate, and of the Arsenal, once defended by the heroic and immortal Nine ; the Delhi of the historic Ridge ; of Nicholson and of Hodson, of Neville Chamberlain, and Reid, and Quintin Battye, and of many others whose names have not even yet become ‘ alms for oblivion,’ as well as of the nameless and heroic dead in the old cemetery. This is the spot where the men of our race and blood performed one of the great exploits of history.

The drowsy human imagination needs all the help the senses can give to quicken it. From a loophole in the walls of Hougoumont, through which the Guards fired all that fierce and far-off June Sunday, the present writer broke a bit of brick, black with the actual smoke of Waterloo ; and every time he looks at it, somehow, on the screen of his imagination, the red squares, the eddying smoke, the charging horsemen of Waterloo begin to take shape ! And so at Delhi, to see the very breach up which the tall figure of Nicholson climbed, with his little band of stormers ; or to stand in front of the shot-pitted Cashmere Gate, or at the entrance to the Arsenal, that fifty years ago, in response to the gesture of Willoughby’s hand and the touch of Conductor Scully’s port-fire, went off in thunder and smoke, makes the half-century



#### 4) AMONGST THE MUTINY CITIES OF INDIA.

betwixt a very narrow interval. One seems to touch hands with the gallant dead, to see their faces, to catch the ring of their voices. And Delhi is very little changed. The old grey wall, rent with breaches, and crowned with shot-battered parapet, is very much as it was on that far-off morning when the storming parties were running towards it. The famous Ridge is little altered from the time the red waves of battle broke against it so long and fiercely. All the buildings with historic names—the Flagstaff Tower, the Observatory, Hindu Rao's house, Sammy's Battery—stand almost exactly as in 1857. An Englishman visiting these spots feels—or ought to feel—as a Greek might have felt at Thermopylæ or Marathon, or an imaginative Dutchman—if such a curiosity exists—at Haarlem. 'This,' he says to himself, 'is one of the classic spots in the history of my race. Here the men of my blood did deeds of immortal fame.' He feels as Browning felt when, with Cape St. Vincent to the north-west, and grey Gibraltar in the dim north-east, he looked on Trafalgar Bay—

'Here and here did England help me: how can I help England?'—say.

The visitor naturally turns his steps first towards the historic Ridge, a long, low spine of tilted strata, running, like the mis-directed thrust of a spear, at an acute angle towards the flank of the city. It is a mere twisting hog's back of broken stone, lower, shorter, and in every way less impressive than the imagination pictured it. It is so low that the city walls are scarcely visible from it above the trees and gardens which have sprung up since 1857.

But the military value of the Ridge is plain at a glance, even to an un instructed eye. It is a stony parapet—the natural curves serving for bastions—looking towards the city; and the front, though low, is so ragged and steep that a rush of stormers must have broken against it like a wave on some seaward-looking rock. The British camp lay behind the shield of the Ridge, its rear protected by the canal, and by an aqueduct which met the canal at an acute angle—the canal forming an almost impassable ditch, to be crossed only by bridges. The strategic value of the Ridge, too, was enormous. It covered the true base of the British force, the Punjab. Far off beyond the horizon, John Lawrence, having disbanded one army, was creating another, and was busy sending every gun and every man he could spare to Delhi. He knew that

there the fate of India was to be decided, and he led the attack with an energy and a resourcefulness which, perhaps beyond any other single cause that can be named, determined the fortunes of the siege. Along the north-west road came trickling the scanty but precious reinforcements that enabled the British to cling to the Ridge—Chamberlain with the 8th and the 61st, and the 1st Punjabs; Daly with his Guides; Hodson with his Irregular Horse; Nicholson with the famous Movable Column. Last and greatest of all, on September 4, came the siege-guns, drawn by elephants, a huge column, with far-stretching train of ammunition waggons.

The actual position held by the British is curiously limited. It extended from the point on which the Mutiny Monument now stands to what is called the Mound; and an air-line from one point to another is only about 4000 yards. Later, the British had to thrust out their piquets northwards, beyond Flagstaff Tower, and westward to Metcalfe's House and the Jumna, making a front of more than four miles. But this was held by a slender thread of defences, with strong piquets as knots in the thread. The Ridge was strong for defence, but weak for attack, since the distance was too great from the city to make any fire from the light guns of the British effective. But, as a matter of fact, from June 8, when the British took possession of the Ridge, to September 4, when the siege-train arrived, the British were besieged rather than besieging. When the heavy guns at last came they were not mounted on the Ridge. With the fierce impulse of their race—the impulse to get as close as possible to the foe—the British planted their breaching batteries on the level ground immediately in front of that part of the city wall chosen for attack. The positions of the batteries are still marked by inscriptions, giving the number of guns, the name of the officer in command, the task assigned, etc. And as the visitor passes from the site of one battery to the other he realises—what, indeed, was a striking feature of the siege—the audacity of the engineering operations. The guns were planted within 600 or 700 yards of the walls of the city. No. 3 siege battery, indeed, was only 180 yards distant from the Water Bastion; it was within actual musketry fire of the enemy, and the guns were worked under such a rain of bullets as few gunners have dared and survived. But pelted with that fierce rain of lead, its guns barked as energetically and as diligently as those of any of the batteries pouring their fire on the assailed

city. No. 2 breaching battery was in front of Ludlow Castle, in what are now the club grounds, two of its nine 24-pounders being commanded by the present Lord Roberts. An inscription on the green, flower-sprinkled turf of the club grounds marks the spot where the battery stood. Daintily dressed children were playing about it when the present writer saw it; the band of a Sepoy regiment was playing a march by Strauss. With the exquisite music of flute and cornet floating out on the evening air, it was strange to remember how the hoarse voices of the guns had once thundered from that very spot.

To walk along the Ridge—say from the Flagstaff Tower to the Mutiny Memorial—is a strange experience. Every foot of the ground is historic. Fifty yards to the north of the Flagstaff Tower is a little enclosure within which lie the graves of the four officers murdered at the main guard of the Cashmere Gate, on May 11, 1857. They were almost the first victims of the Mutiny. At 9 o'clock that morning their regiment—the 54th Native Infantry—with band playing, marched from the Ridge to the city, and filed through the Cashmere Gate. Half an hour later two companies of the same regiment, with two guns, followed. As they came near the gate an officer dashed out at speed with the news that all the officers of the 54th were being cut down by revolted troopers from Meerut, their own men refusing to defend them. The two companies halted, loaded, moved forward at the double to the gate; and, just as they reached it, were met by a little group carrying the body of the unfortunate colonel of the 54th, literally hacked to pieces. The regiment had disappeared! In front of the main guard were strewn the dead bodies of most of its officers. These were collected, brought into the main-guard, and, later, sent up to the Ridge in a bullock-cart. They were abandoned there; and a month later, when Sir Henry Barnard's force occupied the Ridge, the bullock-cart still stood, on the spot marked by this little enclosure, with four skeletons in it, identified by fragments of their white uniform.

The Flagstaff Tower itself is the most substantial building on the Ridge, a solid, round structure, with parapets and a small central tower. The road runs down from it into the old cantonment. On that far-off May 11 the ladies and the non-combatants from the camp gathered here, watching the road that led to the city, and along which from time to time came little groups of hurrying fugitives. To it crept, presently, the bullock-cart, with

its grim freight of murdered officers. Amongst the cluster of pale-faced women standing in the shadow of the Flagstaff Tower was the sister of one of the dead officers. Later came riding the captain of the British guns that had gone into the city, but without his guns, his uniform smeared with blood, to be greeted by his terrified wife. A detachment of Sepoys—men of the 38th—stood near, with piled muskets, and these at intervals broke into fierce shouts of 'Deen, Deen.' They were themselves trembling on the edge of mutiny.

For long hours, amidst such surroundings, the little crowd round the tower stood watching the city. Presently from below the Cashmere Gate shot into the air a white pillar of smoke; the sullen blast of sound which followed told that the magazine had been blown up. A few minutes later could be seen tiny points of smoke rising above the gate itself. It was from the main guard, where the Sepoys were killing their officers. If those unhappy women had possessed glasses, they might have seen the figures leaping in flight from the parapet above the gate. Standing by the Flagstaff Tower one realises the terror and anguish which all that day eddied about it. As night fell the unhappy women and children were themselves homeless fugitives. The tower, it may be added, was the scene of much stern fighting during the siege; the Sepoys directed some of their fiercest and most obstinate attacks upon it.

Walking southward along the Ridge, some 800 yards, the visitor comes to what was called the Mosque picquet, which marks the extreme left of the permanent British position. The 'Mosque' was so named from the four domed corner rooms on its roof. It was really a mausoleum, and is the one building on the Ridge which has been seriously altered in appearance from what it was in 1857. Some 700 yards further south stands the Observatory, on the highest point of the Ridge. In front can still be seen the remains of a battery, and traces of a line of breastwork. The stone platform on the summit of the Observatory is reached by a flight of steps outside the wall; from it a clear view is obtained of the whole contour of the Ridge. Across the little plain in front are the grey parapets of the city walls. From this point the British leaders watched many a fierce combat; and it is strange to climb the steep steps, stand on the little platform, and picture the war-worn, sun-browned faces that must have looked from it for weeks towards the city.

Back of the Observatory runs the main road from the centre and right of the Ridge to the camp. As it happened, this lay exactly under the fire of the guns from the Mori Bastion, and from the number of casualties which took place on it, it was called the Valley of Death. Just where it dips over the Ridge stands the grave of Lieutenant Murray, killed in the assault on September 14—practically the last day of the siege. The whole blood-stained history of those four months lies betwixt this monument and that—a few yards north of the Flagstaff Tower—of the four officers of the 54th killed on May 11.

Three hundred yards south of the Observatory is Hindu Rao's house, an Eastern-looking dwelling, built by a Mahratta chief originally, and afterwards the residence of Commissioner Fraser. It is a solid and impressive structure, with small square windows and a little pillared recess as balcony. Somehow, this building drew to itself the most wrathful and persistent fire from the city, perhaps from the circumstance that it was the centre and headquarters of the British position. It was held by Reid and his Gourkhas, with one company of the 60th Rifles, and the Guide Infantry. The house stood within easy range of the great guns on the city walls, and was simply riddled with shot. It is still pitted with innumerable shot-marks, as though some flaming iron rain had beaten on the walls. Nothing, however, shook the stubborn courage of the men—white-faced or brown-faced—who held it. The visitor stands in front of the war-scarred building, and pictures those fierce, far-off days. What coming and going took place round that building! What doublings to the front to repel some attack on the batteries below! And how they came back—the square-shouldered little Gourkhas, the green-coated Rifles, the bearded Sikhs—blackened with powder-smoke, and bringing in their wounded! The men, indeed, got to feel a strange love for the building, shaken perpetually to the stroke of the guns; and when it was proposed to move the sick and wounded to a distant hospital, they violently protested against the change. They refused to be parted from their comrades, or leave the building which it was a point of honour to hold. When the present King, in 1876, visited the Ridge, this battle-scarred building was again, by a happy touch, held by the 2nd Gourkhas and the 60th Rifles. It is one of the beneficent transformations of peace that a little to the east of Hindu Rao's house the new waterworks have been built which supply the city; so that from the very spot whence

the guns once smote the walls of Delhi with angry fire, now flows clear, cool, running water to every house in the city.

Still further to the south, on the extreme right of the Ridge, stands the Mutiny Memorial. It is only 1,200 yards from the city wall, and formed the site of what was known as the Right Battery. In front was the Sammy House Battery—'Sammy' being the equivalent, in Tommy Atkins's vernacular, of the word 'Swami.' The Mutiny Memorial thus stands on a spot of great historic interest; but architecturally it is ineffective. It resembles nothing so much as a telescope badly drawn out, and the workmanship is poor. The whole structure has the look of being slop-built. The interest of the monument lies in the records of the losses of the various regiments inscribed on stone tablets set in recesses. These figures make a bit of very expressive arithmetic. The total loss of the British during the siege was 1,982, that of the native troops was 1,623; and these figures are proof of the fact—somehow half-forgotten—that the dark-faced soldiers on the Ridge dared and suffered almost as much for the British flag as did their white comrades.

Some of the regimental records are nothing less than astonishing. The 60th Rifles, for example, numbered 390; and its list of killed and wounded amounted to no less than 389! If the stone record tells the truth, only one man in the regiment escaped without a wound! Some of the figures on the monument, however, are visible blunders. Thus the total strength of the Sirmoor Battalion is given as 219, and the number killed as 319. The figures, it is clear, should be reversed; but the blunder shows the carelessness with which the Mutiny Memorial was constructed, and illustrates the official indifference about it, which has permitted such errors to remain so long on a record which is historic, and which, indeed, can hardly be paralleled in military history.

From the Ridge a dusty road running westward takes the visitor to the old military cemetery, surely a patch of very sacred earth; for here sleep the gallant dead who fell during those 104 days, punctuated with incessant attacks and counter-attacks, which make the 'siege' of Delhi. A pathetic air of desolation lies on the little graveyard. The grass about the graves is yellow and dry; the few stunted trees are sun-scorched. No flower blossoms here; no green turf spreads its gracious and living carpet over the heroic dust lying beneath. Some of the memorials are of great interest. Sir Henry Barnard's monument, and that of Colonel



Chester, stand opposite to each other. Quintin Battye's grave is here. Three broken pillars stand side by side, to the memory of Law, Travers, and Lumsden. 'Among the brave soldiers who gave their lives for their country at Delhi, in 1857,' the inscription runs, 'none more gallant and true-hearted than those who here rest from their labour.' On the grave of Jacobs, of the 1st Fusiliers, one of the bravest and gentlest spirits in the whole force, is inscribed a verse from the 31st Psalm: 'Into Thine hand I commit my spirit; Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth.'

On the right of the entrance is the general grave of those killed in the actual assault upon the city; and the visitor stands and looks on the square stone memorial—without date or name—with strange feelings. Home, of the Engineers, must lie here, who led the little explosion party to the Cashmere Gate; Salkeld, who carried the port-fire, Burgess and Carmichael, who in turn were shot trying to light the fuse; Fitzgerald, who led the second section of Nicholson's stormers up the breach; Speke, who fell in the narrow lane beyond the Mori Bastion. The gazer thinks afresh with John Lawrence, as he rode over the Ridge after the siege, 'How much of genius and valour lies buried here.' The pathos of the cemetery is found in the stretch of nameless graves which covers half its area. There are some 250 plain stone slabs, lying blank and uninscribed, in the yellow grass. And beneath each sleeps the forgotten dust of some brave soldier. It is the thought of the unrecorded dead sleeping here, forgotten by the country for which they died, that stirs the visitor's heart with half-angry pity.

From the Ridge one wanders across the plain towards the city, following the curve of the batteries and noting the inscriptions. Thus, the tablet marking where the Sammy House Battery stood has inscribed on it: 'Major Remington, R.A., commanding; armament, eight 9-pounders; to command ground near Mori bastion.' And so of the rest. It is possible still to determine the spot on which the first and second columns were drawn up for the actual rush on the city. Both breaches are visible from it; the line of parapet above the Cashmere Gate can be seen; but the curve of the glacis hides the gate itself. One can realise, standing here, how effective was the plan of the assault. It was almost audacious in its daring; for the attacking columns, taken together, only amounted to 4,000 men, and they were to leap on a city held by 40,000! A storming column, 1,000 strong, was to be launched at the breach in the Cashmere bastion, a second column was to



rush the breach in the Water Bastion. The Cashmere Gate itself was to be blown in, and a third column was to charge through it. A fourth column, under Reid, was to attack the Lahore Gate; while Hope Grant, with the cavalry, was to check any attempt to take the storming parties in flank. The city, that is, was to be attacked at four points simultaneously.

Delhi was India that morn of strife,  
And the Empire hung on the Ridge for life.

It is easy to follow, in imagination, say, the track of the explosion party as the little group ran on with their powder-bags—Home, of the Engineers, leading; Salkeld bringing up the powder party. Salkeld had gone through the stress and terror of May 11, in the main-guard inside the Cashmere Gate; he was now running to meet his death outside it. Seldom has a more daring feat been performed. The whole scene lives afresh as the visitor meditates—the broken parapet above the gate, with its fresco of dark faces and its flashing points of fire; the swaying line of the little explosion party as they ran; the piling of the powder-bags by the gate; the attempts to fire them; the fall of each man, in turn, under the hail of bullets from either flank, as he lifts the port-fire. As the last man stoops over the little heap of black bags with his match, there comes a flash of flame in his face. He jumps into the ditch. Then comes the roar of the explosion, the crash of the torn gate, the sound of running feet as Campbell with the 52nd comes up.

As a matter of fact, it was only the wicket gate which was blown in, and each man of the storming party had to force his way through the splintered wood. Lord Roberts has told how, in the after part of the day, he crept through the wicket, and found in the interior of the gateway the remains of an 18-pounder gun, under which lay the bodies of two or three Sepoys who had evidently been killed by the blast.

Many brave deeds were done that fierce morning in Delhi, but nothing finer is on record than the run of the explosion party to the Cashmere Gate. But history, when written by Europeans, often suffers from what can only be called a curious colour-blindness. That explosion party, for example, as 'history' contemplates it through European spectacles, shrinks oddly in numbers, and consists only of white men. Lord Napier drew up the memorial which now stands on the gate, with the names of the men who

formed the explosion party. Some of the names are familiar to everybody—Home and Salkeld, who led, the two sergeants, Smith and Carmichael, Corporal Burgess and Bugler Hawthorne, who followed; and three out of these six were killed. But on the memorial tablet are the names of five Bengal sappers and miners—Soobadar Toola Ram, Havildar Madho, etc.; and out of these five Sepoys two were killed and one wounded. History, somehow, forgets these five brave Sepoys! And even Lord Napier's memorial is incomplete. The official report says that fourteen Bengal sappers and miners and ten Punjab sappers and miners made up the native portion of the party. The explosion party, that is, consisted of thirty men, only six of them being British. Home, who led the party, and Colonel Baird Smith, the chief engineer, name two of the Sepoys for 'the most determined bravery and coolness'; and the name of neither of these two appears on Lord Napier's tablet! The black faces outnumbered the white in the little running group; but history, we repeat, can see only the white faces!

The visitor passes through the shot-pitted Cashmere Gate, but looks round in vain for the main-guard. This was a twelve-sided enclosure immediately within the gate and intended to serve as a defence to it. The outer gate of the city was on its west side, the gate leading to the city on its south side. Round the inner walls ran a low verandah. It served as quarters for the guard of fifty Sepoys, under a European officer, always on duty here. The top of the bastion was reached by a ramp, which still stands, and immediately over the gateway was a small two-roomed house for the use of the British officer on duty. Two wooden gates opened from the main-guard into the city.

This little spot, through all the hours of May 11, was the scene of the strangest events. The 54th, as we have seen, had passed through it into the city, had broken into revolt and vanished. Two companies of the same regiment arrived later, and, with the men already on duty there, almost filled the little enclosure. Later came 150 men of the 74th. The main-guard was now full, but fugitives from the city from time to time ran into it. Ladies were there, and little children. The dead bodies of some officers of the ill-fated 54th lay stretched on charpoys. The officers tried again and again to lead the Sepoys out into the city, but they refused to follow; they were plainly on the verge of mutiny.

The slow hours went by, the half-dozen British officers and the

fugitives from the city expecting the Sepoys to turn upon them and murder them at any moment. The Arsenal was only 700 yards from the main-guard. About four o'clock there came the sound of guns from it, the sharp sustained rattle of musketry. It was being attacked, and no help could be sent! Presently there came a deep earth-shaking blast of sound. The Arsenal had been blown up, and five minutes later Willoughby and Forrest, with torn uniform and blackened faces, ran into the main-guard. They had escaped from the explosion. Let it be imagined to what a pitch of excitement the little crowd in the main-guard had been by this time raised. A gesture, a shout, an indiscreet order, might bring about a human explosion; and Colonel Vibart has told the story of how at last it came, and how the unhappy British suddenly found they were being massacred. Then came the mad race of men and women up the ramp, and the leap from the battlement.

All this wild scene seems to paint itself afresh on the very air as the visitor stands inside the Cashmere Gate. Of the Arsenal, nothing remains except the gate, which has been preserved, and on which is a not wholly inadequate description, telling how the 'nine resolute Englishmen' kept their trust. In the churchyard is one curious relic of the siege, in the shape of the huge metal globe which once crowned the spire of the church. The mutinous Sepoys used to express their religious feelings, and their hate of all that the church represented, by firing diligently at this target; and it now lies in the churchyard, torn with a hundred bullet holes, a symbol of vain and defeated rage.

The chief personal interest of Delhi, of course, centres in Nicholson. His grave lies, fitly enough, in the little cemetery opposite the Cashmere Gate. A path marked by small piles of cannon-balls leads to the grave. A fringe of cannon-balls is its ornament. The site of the great breaching batteries is just beyond, and across the very spot where Nicholson's dust now sleeps, the British guns, during those fierce days, flashed vengefully at the revolted city. The spot is near where Nicholson drew up his column of stormers on the morning of September 14, and from which he walked across to the next column, and putting his arm on its commanding officer's shoulders, asked him, with a laugh, 'if he was ready!' For danger acted like wine on Nicholson's blood; it lifted him up to a mood of gaiety. 'If I survive this day,' he cried, 'I will tell all the world that Alick Taylor took Delhi.'

When the columns had broken into the city, that led by

Nicholson swung to the right, and fought its way past the Mori Bastion. At the Mori Bastion Nicholson climbed to the parapet and shouted across in his deep voice to Hope Grant, riding near, that 'the fight is going well for us'; and then vanished to the dusty, narrow lane beneath—and to his death. That is the last picturesque glimpse the world catches of Nicholson.

The lane from the Mori Bastion is a mere twisted crevice betwixt the wall and the houses of the city. At some points it is so narrow that the visitor, with extended hands, can almost touch both sides. It led to the Burn Bastion, and to the Lahore Gate, and Nicholson, fiercely bent on pushing an advantage to the utmost, sent his stormers by this lane. It was a mere death-trap. Two barricades crossed it, each armed with a gun. From the houses on the left hand, and from the lofty Burn Bastion in front, flashed incessant musketry fire. Twice the 1st Bengal Fusiliers, led by their officers, dashed up the lane, and twice they fell back, leaving the dusty track strewn with their dead. Then Nicholson came to the front, and, with uplifted sword and deep voice, called on the Fusiliers to follow. While he called, a Sepoy, leaning from a window near, shot him through the body. On the wall opposite is a tablet with the inscription: 'This tablet marks the spot where Brigadier John Nicholson was mortally wounded during the assault on September 14, 1857.' There are two small windows still in the house opposite, and from one of these the fatal shot was fired. As the visitor stands beside it, he looks up the lane. The tall Burn Bastion is gone. It was crowded with Sepoys and edged with flame when Nicholson was calling on his Fusiliers to follow; the whole lane was full of eddying smoke and dust. And with that picture in his eyes, Nicholson fell. His monument stands far off in the Himalayan hills at Rawul Pindi, but his grave, fitly enough, lies in the very track across which he led his storming column to his last fight. And as long as Englishmen preserve the memory of their heroic dead, the grey, narrow, dusty lane beyond the Mori Bastion where Nicholson fell will be classic ground.

The present writer's 'Tale of the Great Mutiny,' published in the pages of this magazine, brought to him numberless letters from the actors themselves in that great drama, and some of these supply strangely interesting details.

Thus I had described the rush of the Fusiliers up the lane, a cluster of officers leading, well in advance of their men. 'Major

Jacob,' I wrote, 'who commanded the regiment, raced in that heroic group; Speke was there, the brother of the African explorer; Greville, Wemyss. The first gun in the lane was captured once more, and Greville, a cool and skilful soldier, promptly spiked it; but the interval betwixt the first gun and the second had to be crossed. It was only a hundred yards, but on every foot of it a ceaseless and fiery hail of shot was beating. The officers as they led went down one by one. Jacob, one of the most gallant soldiers of the whole siege, fell mortally wounded. Jacob's special quality as a soldier was a strangely gentle but heroic coolness. The flame of battle left him at the temperature of an icicle; its thunder did not quicken his pulse by a single beat; and his soldiers had an absolute and exultant confidence in the quick sight, the swift action, the unfaltering composure of their gallant commander. Some of his men halted to pick him up when he fell, but he called on them to leave him and press forward.'

This description brought to me a letter from Major Greville, who is described as spiking the gun:

'I write, hoping that you will correct a slight error in your account of the doings in the "Lane," in your very interesting and graphic account, "The Tale of the Great Mutiny." You describe Major Jacob as the leader, whereas Jacob was mortally wounded on our quitting the Cabul Gate, and I was in command of the regiment. Nicholson gave me the order to charge down the "Lane," and ordered the 75th to clear the ramparts.

'I feel greatly pleased at the high praise bestowed on my dear comrade and friend, a friendship of sixteen years, and an intimate association of four months, sharing the same tent and the same dangers during the siege, which entitles me to say your eulogy is well deserved. I may say that just before his death he excused his groaning, saying he knew I was badly wounded, but that his pain was great, and he could not help it, thus proving, at the point of death, as in life, that a consideration for others was his leading principle.

'Nicholson, two or three days before the assault, called us up, and after explaining the proposed attack, and giving us instructions worthy of his great name, warned us against the serious fault he himself afterwards made, and which possibly marred a glorious victory.'

'MY COUSIN THE BOOKBINDER.'<sup>1</sup>

AN IMAGINARY MONOLOGUE. TIME 1824.

BY E. V. LUCAS.

'O, I am so poorly! I *waked* it at my cousin's the bookbinder's, who is now with God; or, if he is not, 'tis no fault of mine.'—Charles Lamb (to Patmore), 1827.

'So you've been reading that, sir, have you? I have a copy, too. I'll fetch it and show you. . . . The inscription? Oh, yes, that's all right. He's my cousin, true enough; his real name's not Elia, of course; his real name's Lamb—Charles Lamb. He's a clerk at the East India Company's in Leadenhall Street—a little dark man with a large head. Must be nearly fifty by this time.

"Genius," you say? Well, I've heard others say that, too—one or two persons, that is, customers of mine; but I don't know. Perhaps I'm no judge of such things. I'm a bookbinder. The outside of books is my line, not the inside. Oh, yes, I've read Elia's essays—not all through, perhaps, but here and there. "Genius," you say? My idea of genius is not that. I like a straightforward thing. Did you ever read the "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," by Thomas Gray? Now, there's genius. So beautifully it goes—never a trip in the tongue from beginning to end, and everything so clear a child could understand it, and yet 'tis literature, too. My little girl used to say it. "Rasselas," too—do you know that? The happy valley and all the rest of it. That's genius, I think. But not this twisted stuff, going backwards and forwards, and one never feeling quite sure how to take it. I like a plain man with a plain mind.

'It's just the same with my cousin when you meet him. You never know what he's at. He's so nice sometimes, all heart, and friendly—and then the next time I have a notion that everything he says means something else. He leads me on to talk—just as I am now to you, sir, and he seems to agree with what I say so warmly; and then all of a sudden I see that he's just making fun

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1907, by E. V. Lucas, in the United States of America.

of me all the time. He must have his joke. He comes in here sometimes on his way from the office, and precious little he does there, I can tell you. Oh, they're an easy lot, those East India clerks!

'But with all his odd ways and that mischievous mouth of his, his heart's in the right place. Very different from his brother, who died a year or so back. He was nothing to boast of; but the airs that man used to put on! I remember his father well—a little brisk man, wonderfully like Garrick, full of jokes and bright, quick ways. He was really a scrivener, but he didn't do much of that in those days, having fallen into an easy place with old Mr. Salt, the Member of Parliament and a great man in the law. This Mr. Salt lived in the Temple, and little John Lamb—that is your Elia's father—he was his servant, did everything for him, and lived in clover. Mrs. Lamb, she cooked. Mr. Salt was the generous kind—sent the boys to school and all the rest of it. They had it all their own way till the old gentleman died, and then things went wrong one after the other. It's too sad to talk about.

'Except that Mrs. Lamb and her husband's sister, Miss Sarah—"Aunt Hetty," they used to call her—never quite hit it off, it was as happy a family as you'd ask for. But there came a terrible time. . . . It's too sad. Where was I?—oh yes; so you see that Mr. John Lamb, Esquire, who died the other day, had little enough to boast of, but he walked about as if he owned the earth. He used to come in here now and then to give me an order, and he threw it to me as if it was a bone, and I was a dog. Many's the time I had it on my tongue to remind him what his father was, but I kept it back. A word unsaid is still to say. He was at the South Sea House, near his brother in Leadenhall Street, but they didn't have much to say to each other. Mr. John, he was a big, blustering, happy man, while this little one who calls himself Elia is all for quietness and not being seen, and having his own thoughts and his own jokes. They hadn't much in common.

'Besides, there was another thing. There's a sister, you must know, sir, a wonderful wise woman, but she's not always quite right in her head, poor dear; and when it was a question of whether some one had to promise to be responsible for her or she must go to an asylum for the rest of her life, her younger brother, the writer of that book there under your arm, said he would; and he gave up everything and has kept her—it was thirty years ago very nearly—ever since. Well, it was thought in the family and by their friends that John, who was a grown man at the time



and a bachelor, and beginning to be prosperous, ought to have done more than he did, and I think that sometimes he thought so too, although he was usually pretty well satisfied with himself. Anyway, he didn't go to see his brother and sister much, and when he did I've heard that there was often trouble because he would have his own way and argufy until he lost his temper. I was told as how he once had a dispute with Mr. Hazlitt, the writer, over something to do with painting, and knocked him down. Just think of knocking a man down about a matter of paint ! but there's some that high-handed they'd quarrel over anything.

'Like his little brother, he tried writing, too, but he couldn't do it. He wrote a little tract on kindness to animals and brought it here to be bound in morocco. Not to give away, mind, but to keep. "Author's copy" I had to letter it. . . . "Kindness to animals," I nearly said to him ; "what about kindness to sisters ?" But I didn't say it.

'The sister ? Ah, yes, she's the pick. She's a great woman, if ever there was one. I know her better than any of them, because when they were living near here, and her brother—your Mr. Lamb, the author—was at his office, I often looked in with a pork chop or some little thing like that. There's no jokes about her, no saying things that she doesn't mean or anything like that. She's all gold, my cousin Mary is. She understands everything too. I've taken lots of troubles to her—little difficulties about my children and what not—and she understands directly, for all she's an old maid, and tells me just what I want to know. She's the clever one. She can write, too. I've got a little book of her stories and some poetry for children ; here they are, I bound them myself. That's the best binding I can do, real Russia, and hand-tooling, every bit of it. Did she write all of them ? No, she didn't write all, but she wrote the best. Her brother Charles did something to each, but I don't mind that. I think of them as her books—Mary's. If only she had better health she would write much better than he does ; but her poor head. . . . Every year, you must know, she goes out of her mind for a little while. Oh, it's too sad ! . . .

'Have they many friends ? Oh, yes, a good many ! Most of them are too clever for me ; but there are some old-fashioned ones, too, that they like for old sake's sake. They're the best. One or two of them are very good customers of mine. There's Mr. Robinson, the barrister, he brings me lots of books to mend, and I've had work for Mr. Alsopp, too. But as for your Mr. Lamb

—Elia—never a stitch will he have put into any book, even if it's dropping to pieces. Why, he won't even take the dealer's tickets off them. He never thinks of the outside of a book, but you should see him tearing the heart out of them by the light of one candle. I'm told he knows more about what books are worth reading than anyone living. That's odd, isn't it? and his father a little serving man! Life's full of surprises. They say he knows all about poetry, too, and helped the great poets. There's Mr. Wordsworth—why, he dedicated a book to my cousin! I've got it here, "The Waggoner," a pretty book it is, too—and Mr. Coleridge, who wrote about the old sailor man and the albatross, he let my cousin put some little poems of his own into one of his books. It turns one inside out when one thinks of this and then of the old days, and his father powdering Mr. Salt's wig. But I suppose everyone's father had to work once. Still, it's funnier when one belongs to the same family.

'Now I come to remember it, his father used to write a little, too—free and easy pieces for a charitable society he belonged to, and so on. It's odd how writing runs in a family. But there won't be any more Lambs to write—John left no children, only a step-daughter, and Charles and Mary are single. This is the end. Well—

'Yes, they've moved from London now. They're living in Islington. They used to live in the Temple, for years, and then they went to Covent Garden, over a tinman's. Miss Lamb liked that better than the Temple, but her brother liked the Temple best. It gave her more to do, poor dear, during the day, because her sitting-room window looked over Bow Street, and she could see all that was going on. I'm afraid Islington is very dull after that. She could see the two great theatres, too, and they both loved the play.

'He wrote a farce once. I went to see it. Nearly twenty years ago, at the Lane, when Elliston had it. We had orders for the pit, my wife and I, and the house was full of clerks from the South Sea House and the East India House. But it wouldn't do. "Mr. H." it was called, and the whole joke was about the man's full name. But it wouldn't do. No one really minds names, and his wasn't so monstrously bad—only Hogsflesh when all was said and done. All his friends did what we could for it and the gentlemen from the great offices cheered and clapped, but the Noes got it. I never heard such hissing. I climbed up

on the seat to see how poor Miss Lamb and her brother were taking it—they were right in front just by the orchestra—and there was he, hissing away louder than anyone. Think of it, hissing his own play. It's one of the best jokes I ever heard. But she, poor dear! she was just crying.

'No, he never tried the stage again, not to my knowledge. But I always say it wasn't a bad little play. If he'd only let his sister touch it up it would have been all right. She would have told him that Hogsflesh wasn't a good enough joke. She knows. . .

'I went up to Islington to see them only last week, but he was out. A nice little cottage, but very quiet for her. Nothing to see but the houses over the way, and the New River, and the boys fishing for sticklebacks all day long. The river's absolutely in front of the house: nothing between you and it. Have you ever heard of Mr. Dyer, the writer? An old man, nearly blind. Well, he was coming away from my cousin's one day last year and he walked bang into the water before anyone could stop him. Plump in. It's a wonder he wasn't drowned. There was an account of it in the "London Magazine" for December; for my cousin's a terrible man to serve up his friends and have jokes against them. He writes about everything just as it happens. I'm always expecting he'll have me in one of his essays. In fact, to tell you a secret, sir, that's why I read them. But I don't think he's got me yet.

'Yes, Islington's very different from Covent Garden, and the Temple too, for though the Temple is quiet enough, you've only got to pop into Fleet Street to be in the thick of everything. When they lived there she used to like doing her shopping in Fetter Lane, because it was at the top of the Lane where she used to go to school years and years ago. For she's getting to be an old woman, you know. Let me see, how old is she? Why, let's see, when was Mary born? It must have been 1763; no, it was 1764. Why, she'll be sixty this year!

'"What does she do all day?" Well, she reads a great deal, stories for the most part. And she sews. She's very good with her needle. And then, she has her thoughts. And at night they play cards. He gets back pretty soon, you know. Those East India gentlemen, they don't do too much, I can tell you, and I'm told he's one of the laziest, always either talking or writing letters, I hear. There's a good story of him down there. One of the superiors met him coming in at about half-past ten, and he said

to him, sharplike, "Mr. Lamb," he said, "you come very late." And what do you think my cousin said, the impudent little fellow? "Yes," he said, as cool as you like, "yes," he said, "but see how early I go," he said. I can't say it as he did, because he stammers and stutters, and I'm no mimic; but the brass of it shut the gentleman up. My cousin told me himself. He likes to tell you his good things; but I can't understand a lot of them. Everyone has a different idea of what's funny. I'm with him, though, about old Munden. I could laugh at him all night.

'I'm troubled about them up there, so far from London and the theatres and the noise. It's a mistake to give up so much all at once. And they've given up their regular evenings, too, when people came in to play cards and talk. You can't ask busy folk to go to Islington.

'My cousin told me some bad news last week. She says that your Lamb—Elia—although he has such an easy time and a large salary, wants to leave the East India House and do nothing. I hope they won't let him. I know enough of life and of him to see what a mistake it would be. It's a mistake to go to Islington; it will be a worse mistake to retire. He says he wants to live in the country; but he doesn't really. Authors don't know what they want. I always say that every author ought to have a bookbinder to advise him.

'She knows it's all wrong, poor dear, but what can she do? He worries so. She sees him all miserable, and after she's said all she can against his plans she agrees with them. That's like good women. When they see that what must be must be, they do their best. But it is very sad . . . It's her I'm so sorry for. He's the kind of man that ought to go to business every day.

'Well, sir, good night to you. I hope I haven't been tedious with all my talk.

'No, sir, not quite a genius; but very clever, I grant you.'

## *THE RECREATION OF THE PEOPLE.*

BY CANON BARNETT.

WORK may, as Carlyle says, be a blessing, but work is not undertaken for work's sake. Work is part of the universal struggle for existence. Men work to live. But the animal world early found that existence does not consist in keeping alive. All animals play. They let off surplus energy in imitating their own activities, and they recreate exhausted powers by change of occupation. Man, as soon as he came into his inheritance of reason, recognised play as an object of desire, and as well as working for his existence, and perhaps even before he worked to obtain power and glory, he worked to obtain recreation. A man, according to Schiller's famous saying, is fully human only when he plays.

Work, then, let it be admitted, is undertaken not for work's sake but largely for the sake of recreation. England has been made the workshop of the world, its fair fields and lovely homesteads have been turned into dark towns and grimy streets, partly in the hope that more of its citizens may have enjoyment in life. Men toil in close offices under dark skies, not just to increase the volume of exports and imports, and not always to increase their power or to win honour from one another; they dream of happy hours of play, they picture themselves travelling in strange countries or tranquilly enjoying their leisure in some villa or pleasant garden. Men spend laborious days as reformers, on public boards or as public servants, very largely so as to release their neighbours from the prison house of labour, where so many, giving their lives 'to some unmeaning task work, die unfreed, having seen nothing, still unblest.'

Recreation is an object of work. The recreations of the people consume much of the fruit of the labour of the people. Their play discloses what is in their heads and minds and to what end they will direct their power. Their use of leisure is a signpost showing whether the course of the nation is towards extinction in ignorance and self-indulgence or towards greater brightness in the revelation of character and the service of mankind. By their idle

words and by the acts of their idle times men are most fairly judged.

The recreation of the people is therefore a subject of greater importance than is always remembered. The country is being lost or saved in its play, and the use of holidays needs as much consideration as the use of workdays.

Would that some Charles Booth could undertake an inquiry into 'the life and leisure of the people' to put alongside that into their life and work! Without such an inquiry the only basis for the consideration which I invite is the impression left on the minds of individuals, and all I can offer is the impression made on my mind by a long residence in East London.

People during the last quarter of a century have greatly increased their command of leisure. The command, as Board of Trade inspectors remind us, is not sufficient as long as the rule of seventy or even sixty hours of work a week still holds in some trades. But the weekly half-holiday has become almost universal, some skilled trades have secured an eight or nine hours' day, many workshops every year close for a week, and the members of the building trades begin work late and knock off early during the summer months. There is thus much leisure available for recreation. What do the people do? How do these crowds who swarm through the streets on Saturday afternoons spend their holiday?

Many visit the public houses and try to drink themselves out of their gloom. 'To get drunk,' we have been told, is 'the shortest way out of Manchester,' and many citizens in every city go at any rate some distance along this way. They find they live a larger, fuller life as, standing in the warm bright bar, they drink and talk as if they were 'lords.' The returns which suggest that the drink bill of a workman's family is 5s. or 6s. a week prove how popular is this use of leisure, and they who begin a holiday by drinking probably spend the rest of it in sleeping. The identification of rest with sleep is very common, and a workman who knows he has a fair claim to rest thinks himself justified in sleeping or dozing hour after hour during Saturday and Sunday. 'What,' I once asked an engineer, 'should I find most of your mates doing if I called on Sunday?' His answer was short: 'Sleeping.'

Another large body of workers as soon as they are free hurry off to some form of excitement. They go in their thousands to see a football match, they yell with those who yell, they are roused by the spectacle of battle, and they indulge in hot, 'sultry' talk. Or



they go to some race or trial of strength on which bets are possible. They feel in the rise and fall of the chance of winning a new stirring of their dull selves, and they dream of wealth to be enjoyed in wearing a coat with a fur collar and in becoming owners of sporting champions. Or they go to music halls—1,250,000 go every week in London—where if the excitement be less violent it still avails to move their thoughts into other channels. They see colour instead of dusky dirt, they hear songs instead of the clash of machinery, they are interested as a performer risks his life, and the jokes make no demands on their thoughts. The theatres probably are less popular, at any rate among men, but they attract great numbers, especially to plays which appeal to generous impulses. An audience enjoys the easy satisfaction of shouting down a villain. The same sort of excitement is that provided on Sunday mornings in the clubs, where in somewhat sordid surroundings a few actors and singers try to stir the muddled feelings of their audience by appeals which are more or less vulgar.

There is finally another large body of released workers who simply go home. They are more in number than is generally imagined, and they constitute the solid part of the community. They are not often found at meetings or clubs. Their opinions are not easily discovered. Large numbers never vote. They go home from work, they make themselves tidy, they do odd jobs about the house, they go out shopping with their wives, they walk with the children, they, as a family party, visit their friends, they sleep, and they read the weekly paper. All this is estimable, and the mere catalogue makes a picture pleasant to the middle-class imagination of what a workman's life should be. The workers get repose, but from a larger point of view it cannot be said they return to work invigorated by new thoughts and new experiences, with new powers and new conceptions of life's use. Repose is sterilised recreation.

These, it seems to me, are the three main streams which flow from work to leisure—that towards drink, that towards excitement, and that towards home repose.

There are other workers—an increasing number, but small in comparison with those in one of the main streams—who use their leisure to attend classes, to study with a view to greater technical skill or to read the books now so easily bought. There are some who take other jobs, forgetting that the wages which buy eight hours' work should buy also eight hours' sleep and eight hours' play. There are many who bicycle, some it may be for the excitement of



rapid motion, but some also for the joy of visiting the country and of social intercourse. There are many who play games and take vigorous exercise. There are a few—markedly a few—who have hobbies or pursuits on which they exercise their less used powers of heart or head or limb.

Such is the general impression which long experience has left on my mind as to the recreations of the people. It is, however, possible to give a closer inspection to some popular forms of amusement.

Consider first one of the seaside resorts during the month of August. Look at Blackpool, or Margate, or Weston. On the Saturday before Bank Holiday 100,000*l.* was drawn out of the banks at Blackburn and 200,000*l.* from the banks at Oldham, to be spent in recreation, mostly at Blackpool. How was it spent?

The sight of the beach of one of these resorts is familiar. There is the mass of people brightly coloured and loudly talking, broken into rapidly changing groups. There are the nigger singers, the buffoons, the acrobats; there are the great restaurants and hotels inviting lavish expenditure on food. There are bookstalls laden with trashy novels. There are the overridden beasts and the overworked maid-servants; there is the loafing on the pier, and the sleep after heavy meals. Nothing especially wicked, much that shows good nature, but everything so vulgar—so empty of interest, so far below what thinking men and women should enjoy, so unworthy the expenditure of hundreds of thousands of pounds earned by hard work.

Consider again the music hall. Mr. Stead has lent his eyes. 'If,' he says, 'I had to sum up the whole performance in a single phrase I should say "Drivel for dregs." For three and a half hours I sat patiently listening to the most unsufferable banality and imbecility which ever fell on human ears. There was neither beauty nor humour, no appeal to taste or to intelligence, nothing but vulgarity and stupidity to recreate the heirs of a thousand years of civilisation and the citizens of an empire on which the sun never sets.' And in one year there are some seventy million admissions to music halls in London! Consider, too, the football fields or the racecourses. The crowd of spectators is often 100,000 to 200,000 persons. What can they find worthy the interest of a reasonable creature? Would they be present if it were not for the excitement of gambling, the mind-destroying pleasure of risking their money to get their neighbours' money? 'If,' as Sir James Crichton-

Browne says, 'you would see the English physiognomy at its worst, go to the platform of a railway station on the day of a suburban race meeting when the special trains are starting. On most of the faces you detect the grin of greed, on many the leer of low cunning, on some the stamp of positive rascality.'

Consider once more the crowds who go to the country in the summer. 'One of the saddest sights of the Lake District during the tourist season,' says Canon Rawnsley, 'is the aimless wandering of the hard-worked folk who have waited a whole year for their annual holiday, and, having obtained it, do not know what to do with it. They stand with Skiddaw, glorious in its purple mantle of heather, on one side and the blue hills of Borrowdale and the shining lake on the other, and ask "Which is the way to the scenery?"' The people, according to this observer, are dull and bored amid the greatest beauty. The excursionist finds nothing in nature which is his; he reads the handwriting of truth and beauty, but understands not what he reads.

But enough of impressions of popular recreations. There are brighter sides to notice. There is, for instance, health in the instinct which turns to the country for enjoyment. There is hope in the prevalent good temper, in the untiring energy and curiosity which is always seeking something new. There are better things than have been mentioned and there are worse things, but as a general conclusion it may, I think, be agreed that the recreations of the people are not such as recreate human nature for further progress. The lavish expenditure of hardly earned wages on mere bodily comfort does not suggest that the people are cherishing high political ideals, and the galvanised idleness which characterises so much popular pleasure does not promise for the future an England which will be called blessed or be itself 'merrie.'

England in her great days was 'Merrie England.' Many of our forefathers' recreations were, judged by our standard, cruel and horribly brutal. They had, however, certain notable characteristics. They made greater demands both on body and mind. When there were neither trains nor trams nor grand stands people had to take more exertion to get pleasure and they themselves joined in the play or in the sport. Their delight, too, was often in the fellowship they secured, and 'fellowship,' as Morris says, 'is life and lack of fellowship is death.' Our fathers' sports, even if they were cruel—and the 'Book of Sports' shows how many were not cruel but full

of grace—had often this virtue of fellowship. Their pageants and spectacles—faithfully pictured by Scott in his account of the revels of Kenilworth—were not just shows to be lazily watched; they enlisted the interest and ingenuity of the spectators and stirred their minds to discover the meaning of some allegory or trace out some mystery.

The recreations which made England 'merrie' were stopped in their development by the combined influence of puritanism and of the industrial revolution. Far be it from me to consider as evil either the one or the other. In all progress there is destruction. The puritan spirit put down cruel sports such as bull baiting and cock fighting, and with them many innocent pleasures. The industrial revolution drew the people from their homes in the fields and valleys, established them in towns, gave them higher wages and cheaper food. Under the combined influence work took possession of the nation's being. It ruled as a tyrant, and the gospel of work became the one gospel for the people.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century signs of reaction are apparent. Sleary, in Dickens's 'Hard Times,' urges on the economist the continual refrain: 'The people, Squire, must be amused,' and Herbert Spencer, returning from America in 1882, declares the need of the 'Gospel of Recreation.' The reaction has since increased in pace. The right to shorter and shorter hours of labour is now admitted, and the provision of amusement has become a great business. The demand which has secured shorter hours may safely be left to rescue further leisure from work; but demand has not, as we have seen, been followed by the establishment of healthy recreation. A child knows a holiday is good, but he needs also to know how to enjoy it or he will do mischief to himself or others. The people also need, as well as leisure, the knowledge of what constitutes recreation.

The subject is not simple, and Professor Karl Groos, in his book 'The Play of Man,' has with Teutonic thoroughness analysed the subject from the physiological, the biological, and the psychological standpoints. The book is worthy of study by students, but it seems to me that recreation must involve (1) some excitement, (2) some strengthening of the less used fibres of the mind or body, (3) the activity of the imagination.

(1) Recreation must involve some excitement, some appeal to an existing interest, some change, some stirring in the wearied or sleeping embers of the mind. Routine work, tending to become

more and more routine, wears life. It is life of which our nerves are scant, and recreation should revive the sources of life. Most people, as Mr. Balfour, look askance at efforts which, under the guise of amusing, aim to impart useful culture. Recreation must be something other than repose—something more stirring than sleep or loafing—it must be something attractive and not something undertaken as a duty.

(2) Recreation must involve the strengthening of the less used fibres of the mind and the body; the embers which are stirred by excitement need to be fed with new fuel, or the flames will soon sink into ashes. Gambling and drink, sensational dramas, and exciting shows stir but do not strengthen the mind. Mere change—the fresh excursion every day, the spectacle of a contest—wears out the powers of being. 'The crime of sense is avenged by sense which wears with time.' On the other hand, games well played fulfil the condition, and there is no more cheering sight than that of playing fields where young and old are using their limbs intent on doing their best. Music, foreign travel, congenial society, reading, chess, all games of skill, also fulfil the condition, as they make a claim on the activity of heart or mind, and so strengthen their fibres. A good drama is recreation if the spectator is called to give himself to thought and to feeling. He then becomes in a sense a fellow creator with the author, he has what Professor Groos says satisfies everyone, 'the joy of being a cause,' or, as he explains in another passage, 'it is only when emotion is in a measure our own work do we enjoy the result.' Recreation must call out activity, it fails if it gives and requires nothing. We only have what we give. He that would save his life loses it.

(3) The last and most notable mark of recreation is the use of the imagination. Recreation comes from within and not from without the man. It depends on that a man *is* and not upon what a man *has*. A child grows tired of his toys, a man wearies of his possessions, but there is no being tired of the imagination which leaps ahead and every day reveals something new. Sleary was wrong when he said, 'People must be amused.' He should have said, 'People must amuse themselves.' Their recreation must, that is, come from the use of their own faculties of heart and mind. 'The cultivation of the inner life,' it was truly said in a discussion on the hard lot of the middle classes, 'is the only cure for the commercial tyrannies and class prejudices of that class.' The Japanese are the best holiday takers I have ever met; they have in themselves

a taste for beauty, and they go to the country to enjoy the use of that taste. A man who because he is interested in mankind sets himself on his holiday to observe and study the habits of man, or, because he cares for Nature, looks deeper into her secrets by the way of plants or rocks or stars, or, because he is familiar with history, seeks in buildings and places illustrations of the past; a holiday maker who in such ways uses his inner powers will come home refreshed. His pleasure has come from within; he, on the other hand, who has lounged about a pier, moved from place to place, travelled from sight to sight, looking always for pleasure from outside himself, will come home bored.

If such be the constituents of recreation one reflection stands out clearly, and that is the importance of educating or directing the demand for amusement. Popular demand can only choose what it knows; it could not choose the pictures for an art gallery or the best machines for the workshop, neither can it settle the amusements which are recreative. Children and young people are with great care fitted for work and taught how to earn a living; there is equal need that the people be fitted for recreation, and taught how to enjoy their being. They must know before they can choose. Education, and not the House of Lords, is the safeguard of democratic government.

Mr. Dill's 'History of Social Life in the Towns of the Roman Empire during the First and Second Centuries' shows that there is a striking likeness between the condition of those times to that which prevails in England. The millionaires made noble benefactions, there were magnificent spectacles, there were contests which roused lunatic excitement as one of the combatants succeeded in some brutal strife, there was lavish provision of games and great enjoyment in feasting. The amusement was provided by others' gifts, and, as Mr. Dill remarks, the people were more and more drawn from 'interest in the things of the mind.' The games of Rome were steps in the decline and fall of Rome.

The lesson which modern and ancient experience offers is that people must be as thoughtfully and as seriously prepared for their recreation as for their work.

The first illusion which must, I think, be destroyed is that a holiday means a vacation or an empty time. It is not enough to close the school and let the children have no lessons. It is not enough to enact an eight hours' day and leave the people without resources. If the spirit of toil be turned out of men's lives and they

be left swept and garnished, there are spirits of leisure that will return which may be ten times worse. It is a pathetic sight often presented in a playground, when after some aimless running and pushing, the children gradually grow listless, fractious, and quarrelsome. They came to enjoy themselves and cannot. Many a boy for want of occupation for his leisure has taken to crime. It is not always love of evil or even greed which makes him a thief, it is in the pure spirit of adventure that he stalks his prey on the coster's cart, risks his liberty and dodges the police. It is because they have no more interesting occupation that eager little heads pop out of windows when the police make a capture and eager little tongues tell experiences of arrests which baby eyes have seen. The empty holiday is a burden to a child, and everyone has heard of the 'bus driver who could think of nothing better to do on his off day than to ride on a 'bus beside a mate. The idea that, given leisure, the people will find recreation is not justified. A kitten may be satisfied with aimless play, but a spark disturbs mankind's clod and his play needs direction.

The other illusion which must be dissipated is that amusement should call for no effort on the part of those to be amused. It is the common mistake of benevolence that it tries to remove difficulties rather than strengthen people to surmount difficulties. The gift which provides food is often destructive of the powers which earn food. In the same way the benevolence which, as among the Romans, provides shows, entertainments, and feasts destroys at last the capacity for pleasure. Toys often stifle children's imaginations and develop a greed for possession; children enjoy more truly what they themselves help to create, so that a bit of wood with inkspots for eyes, which they themselves have made, is more precious than an expensive doll. Grown people's amusements to be satisfying must also call out effort.

The shattering of these two illusions leaves society face to face with the obligation to teach people to play as well as to work. It is not enough to give leisure and leave amusement to follow. Neither is it enough to provide popular amusement. James I. was not a great king but he was a collector of wisdom, and he laid down for his son a guide for his games as well as for his work. Teachers and parents with greater experience might, like the king, guide their children.

(1) It is not, I think, waste of time to watch infants when at play, to encourage their efforts, to welcome their calls to look, and



to enter into their imaginings. This watching, so usual among the children of the richer classes, is missed by the children of the poorer and often leaves a gap in their development.

(2) It would not either be wasted expenditure to employ game-teachers in the elementary schools who on Saturdays and out of school hours would teach children games, indoor and outdoor, conduct small parties to places of interest, and organise country walks or excursions such as are common in Swiss schools.

(3) It is, I think, reasonable to ask that the great school buildings and playgrounds should be more continually at the children's service. They have been built at great expense. They are often the most airy and largest space in a crowded neighbourhood. Why should they be in the children's use for only some twenty-five hours a week? Why should they be closed during two whole months? The experience gained in the vacation schools advocated by Mrs. Humphry Ward gives an object lesson in what might be done. During the afternoon hours between five and seven, and in the summer holidays, the children, with the greatest delight to themselves, might be drawn to see new things, to use new faculties of admiration or develop new tastes. Every child might thus be given a hobby. Recreation means, as we have seen, change. If the children ended their school days with more interests, with eyes opened to see in the country not only a nest to be taken but a brood of birds to be watched, with hands capable not only to make things but to create beauty, the limits within which they could find change would be greatly enlarged.

If I may now extend my suggestion to parents I would say that those of all classes might do more in planning holidays for their children. There is now a strong disposition to leave all responsibility to the teachers, and parents are in the danger of losing parental authority. In the holidays is their chance of regaining authority; for every day they could plan occupation, put aside time to join in some common pursuit, arrange visits, and make themselves companions of their own children. The teacher may be held responsible, but his work is often spoiled in the idle hours of a holiday, when bad books are read, vulgar sights enjoyed, low companions found, and habits of loafing developed. But it is not only teachers and parents by whom children are guided. There is a host of men and women who plan treats, excursions, and country holidays. Their efforts could, I think, be made more valuable. The monster day treats, which give excitement and turn the children's minds in a direction towards



the excitements of crowds and of stimulants from without, might be exchanged for small treats where ten or twenty children in close companionship with their guide would enjoy one another's company, find new interests, and store up memories of things seen and heard. Tramps through England might be organised for elder boys and girls in which visits might be paid to historic fields and scenes of beauty, and objects of interest sought. Children about to be sent to the country by a Holiday Fund might, as is now very happily done by a committee in connection with the London Fund, by means of pictures and talk be taught what to look for and be encouraged to tell of their discoveries. Habits of singing might be developed, as among the Welsh or the Swiss. And in a thousand ways thought might be drawn to the observation of nature. Good people might, if I may say so, give up the provision of those entertainments which now, absorbing so much of the energy of curates and laywomen, seem only to prepare the children to look for the entertainment of the music halls. They might instead teach children one by one to find amusement, each one in his own being.

The hope of the future lies obviously in the training of the children, but the elder members of the community might also have more chances of growth. Employers, for instance, might more generally substitute holidays of weeks for holidays of days, and so encourage the workpeople to plan their reasonable use. They might also enlarge their minds by informing them about the material on which they work, whence it comes and whither it goes. Miss Addams tells of a firm in Ohio where the hands are gathered to hear the reports of the travellers as they return from Constantinople, Italy, or China, and learn how the goods they have made are used by strange people. In the same firm lantern lectures are given on the countries with which the firm has dealings, and generally the hands are made partners in the thoughts of the heads. 'This,' as Miss Addams says, 'is a crude example of the way in which a larger framework may be given to the worker's mind,' and she adds, 'as a poet bathes the outer world for us in the hues of human feeling, so the workman needs someone to bathe his surroundings with a human significance.' Employers also, following the example of Messrs. Cadbury, might require their young people not only to attend evening classes to make them fitter for work, but also to attend one class which will fit them to ride hobbies which will carry them from the strain and routine of work into other and recreating surroundings. Municipal bodies have in these latter days done much in

the right direction by opening playing fields, picture galleries, and libraries, and by giving free performances of high-class music. They might perhaps do more to break up the monotony of the streets, introducing more of the country into town, and requiring dignity as well as healthiness in the great buildings. Such variety adds greatly to the joy of living, diverts the minds of weary workers, and stimulates the admiration which is one-third of life.

But, after all, improvement starts from individuals, and it is the action of individual men and women which will reform popular recreation. They must, each one as if the reform depended on him alone, be morally thoughtful about the amusements they encourage or patronise, and be considerate in preparing for their own pleasure. Each one must develop his own being, and stir up the faculties of his own mind. Each one must practise the muscles of his mind as a racer practises the muscles of his legs.

The most completely satisfying recreation is possibly in the intercourse of friends, and it is a sad feature in English holidays that men and their wives, who are naturally the closest friends, seem to find so little pleasure in one another's company. They walk one behind the other in the country, they are rarely found together at places of entertainment, and they are seldom seen talking with any vivacity. The fault lies in the fact that they have not developed their own being, they have neither interests nor hobbies nor ideas, and so have nothing to talk about save wages, household difficulties, and the shortest way home.

Enough, however, in the way of suggestion as to what may be done in guiding people towards recreation. Under guidance recreations would take another than their present character. People, having a wider range of interests, would find change within those interests, and cease to turn from sensation to sleep and from sleep to sensation. People having active minds would look to exercise their minds in a game of skill, in searching Nature's secrets, in spirited talk, in some creative activity, in following a thought-provoking drama, in the use, that is, of their highest human faculties. The forms of recreation would be changed. Much of the difficulty about what seems Sunday desecration would then vanish. The play of the people would no longer be fatal to the quiet of the day, or inconsistent with the worship which demands the consecration of the whole being. It is not recreation so much as the form of recreation which desecrates Sunday. This, however, is part of another subject.

As a conclusion of the whole matter I would say how it seems to me that Merrie England need be not only in the past. The present time is the best of times. There are to-day resources for men's enjoyment such as never existed in any other age or country. There are fresh and pure capacities in human nature which are evident in many signs of energy, of admiration, and of good will. If the resources were used, if the capacities were developed, there would soon be popular recreations to attract human longings and encourage the hope of a future when the glory of England shall not be in its possessions of gold and territory, but in a people happy in the full use of their powers of heart and of head.

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## A GRAMMARIAN'S WEDDING.

[NOTE.—The following lines, recovered from the fly-leaves of a visitor's book at an inn near Florence, appear to form a companion poem to *A Grammarian's Funeral* by Robert Browning, one of whose literary characteristics was a preference for recondite subjects. There would seem to be little doubt that they refer to the story of Speroni Panvinus (as narrated by Bellarmine), who was born in 1501, and educated at Bologna under the learned Pomponiatus. He is only less celebrated than his son, Onuphrius, the historian, possibly the offspring of the union recorded below, though another story says that Panvinus was married at least twice.]

Let us<sup>1</sup> begin to drag our happy pair  
 Lapped in their fond ease ;  
 With blank-verse march our *Io Hymen* share  
 Dactyls and spondees.  
 Not in the streets, for idle fish-eyed gaze,  
 Pull we the carriage ;  
 June shall shed blossoms from her country ways,  
 Blessing this marriage.  
 Sharp to the turn !—we tramp a sweeter gait  
 Far from the traffic.  
 So ! with iambic left-right alternate  
 Last of the Sapphic,  
 Honouring more our Master—he who first  
 Scanned the Greek chorus,  
 Schemed Galliambic, and correctly versed  
 Tryphiodorus,  
 Numbered Lucretius' penthemimerals,  
 Ruled his cæsura.  
 (Strain, biped steeds ! what though the yoke-rope galls ?—  
*Alia dura !*<sup>2</sup>—  
 Think what's his bee-buzz on her petal lips—  
 Epithalamium !—  
 She silent fragrance to the sound that sips,  
 Though but her name he hum !)

<sup>1</sup> The speaker is one of a class of pupils attending the marriage of their master to a girl-pupil. The poem gives an insight into an early system of co-education.

<sup>2</sup> An Horatian quotation, which may be translated 'tough thews.'

Sweet as the Sea-Born,<sup>1</sup> as Athena wise,  
 Glowing as Hebe,  
 We marked the maid, and said, 'Our Master's prize  
 Only must she be!'—  
 She, the dear promise of an April day  
 Slipped from Olympus!  
 (Hear Laughter-Lover to the Eyes of grey,  
 'How mortals imp us!')  
 May fed the hope her June has now fulfilled—  
 Sure diagnosis!  
 Ah, but in May a few of us were thrilled!—  
 (That's a *meiosis* <sup>2</sup>)—  
 All; though no envy where there lay no hope  
 Save of disasters;  
 Each Jack, too, had his Jill, no misanthrope!—  
*She* was our Master's.  
 True, our Bombastes, poor fool, mocked that we  
 Brooked such deprival,  
 Swore, with the valour of the emphatic d——,  
 Rout for the rival,  
 Ambushed our lady, and with all the art  
 Wine could provide him  
 Pleaded, until she from a tender heart  
 Gently denied him.  
 How we then planned, despaired, hoped, plotted, guessed,  
 Wondered, conjectured!  
 Fire in her eyes alone of all the rest  
 Watched him who lectured;  
 Not till he met it could her brave gaze shift,  
*Δία γυναικῶν*! <sup>3</sup>—  
 Our sappy pines on winter hearths burn swift;  
 Swifter the dry cone.  
 Poring on scholiast script with single eye,  
 Poor Polyphemus!  
 Nursing a goddess—we, the common fry—  
 How should he deem us?  
 What else drove blood in wizened cheek again,  
 Gave him his two eyes?

<sup>1</sup> Aphrodite or Venus. So 'Laughter-Lover' below.

<sup>2</sup> An under-statement.

<sup>3</sup> 'God-like among women'—an Homeric phrase.

We pushed a Galatea<sup>1</sup> in his ken,  
 Her and her blue eyes!  
 Hopes lit him; questioned qualms 'If Love should cheat?'  
 (How the days wore on!)  
 Age posed his bitter 'gainst her springing sweet;  
 'There's *oxymoron*!<sup>2</sup>  
 Aye, and the oil and water in one flask?—  
 Æschylus<sup>3</sup> hints it.  
 What's Nature or her laws? That's Love's own task;  
*Omnia vincit*!<sup>4</sup>

*Omnia vicit*, too! (What coward jeers  
 'Atropos occat'?<sup>5</sup>  
 On *this* day speak of the abhorred shears?  
 What's here to mock at?  
 'Mori memento,' quoth Bombastes; hark  
 Knell to the nuptial!—  
 Roll hounds i' th' ditch! to-day no dog shall bark,  
 No, nor a pup shall!)  
 Here's the wreathed cottage, fit for them alone.  
 Peace to our shoving!  
 Our part is done; the rest is all their own,  
 Living and loving.  
 Over the threshold lift his laughing bride—  
 Don't let it trip her!  
 Shut the door.  
 H'mph! it's autumn now outside.  
 There! the last slipper!<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Galatea was a maid with whom, according to Theocritus, Polyphemus fell in love.

<sup>2</sup> A classical figure, signifying the collocation of opposites.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Agamemnon*, 322. Æschylus actually says 'vinegar and oil;' but the result is the same.

<sup>4</sup> 'Omnia vincit amor,' 'Love conquers all;' from Vergil's *Eclogues*. The change of tense in the next line means 'Love conquered all,' in the present case.

<sup>5</sup> Part of a Latin hexameter, meaning that, of the Three Fates, Clotho held the distaff, Lachesis span, and Atropos cut the thread. The anticipation of Milton, *Lyoidas*, 75, is interesting.

<sup>6</sup> There is a blurred signature in the original, which looks more like F. S. than R. B.

## OUTLAWS OF YESTERDAY.

BY MAJOR G. F. MACMUNN, D.S.O., R.F.A.

‘Thou art the Judge. We are bruised thus.

But, the Judgment over, join sides with us.’

BROWNING, *Holy-Cross Day.*

PERHAPS the English learn of their own past sorrows, and perhaps history has its lesson for them, for all folk say to the contrary. It took over a hundred years from the coming of William the Norman, and the fight by the Hoar Apple Tree on Telham Down, ere the Saxon and the Norman became the true English. Many a rising had to be trampled out, and many a baron ousted from his lands, and the last of the English die in the Fens, before the Saxon could accept the Norman and the latter be absorbed among the old English.

Thus, when less than eight years after the Farmers crossed the British border to blow up an armoured train, we see General Louis Botha, late of the forces of the South African Republic, Premier of a self-governing British Transvaal, and moving the Speech from the British Throne, we may well say, ‘Truly the English have learnt since the tea-chests floated in Boston harbour.’ How and why they learn is their own business . . . their very peculiar business, which the rest of the world would give much to know. If you don’t understand, ask in Metz where the young Lorrainers go.

To read General Botha’s speech, full of loyalty to his own country and full of promise for his own portion of it, is to feel that the English really do know their own business, and to know that the war, except as a reminiscence, is dead for ever, ‘. . . in the large and sunlit land, where no wrong bites to the bone.’

There are other sides of the case, of course, and no doubt in the bars in Kimberley and Mafeking the same old story holds—how loyalty never pays, how those that stuck to their country starve while their enemies prosper, and how the man who was not too old to lie out in the Kimberley and Ladysmith trenches, was too old to obtain a Government appointment at the end of the war.



Civil war, and civil war of a kind the late war was, must always leave a bitter aftermath in some quarters. It is old history now, yet we know well the bitter feelings of the Royalists who could find themselves little the gainers when the King enjoyed his own again. The Afrikaner English could never rightly see that the day the Dutch surrendered they became British subjects, and had as good rights as any. The former dreamt of confiscation and fat lands for the English, and all the State patronage, exactly as did William's followers, with better success. The which meant a hundred years of risings and repression. It was not enough for them that they fought for liberty and their country . . . and who, perhaps, can blame them, for they only see their own waste lands, or the knave get compensation for losses never sustained, and the honest man go without.

Therefore it is easy to understand, if not to acquiesce in, the hot talk that still seethes in the bars of the English towns, and the view of the old colonial soldier, who has served in every war, from Basutoland and Phokwane to the Jameson Raid and the last war. 'Loyalty does not pay' is the old cry of South Africa, a cry that had some truth in it after the old war, but which is now only true in the mercenary sense. Loyalty never paid the loyal in hard cash, and happily, as a rule, the loyal do not thus expect reward. The War impoverished, as does all war, those concerned with it, and the Colonial often enough found a ruined homestead and inadequate compensation all that came his way. He has perhaps forgotten the other alternative of a Pan-Dutch rule over him. When wars wage and peace brings new conditions, it is not one nor perhaps two generations that will see the new nation arise and the good accrue. Since, too, the late war is largely due to the Motherland having shirked her duties years ago, we must bear with the taunt 'Loyalty does not pay.' We may hope we do not deserve it, as we did the far bitterer cry after the War of Independence, when we did little enough for those loyal gentlemen who had to lose their all for the sake of the old flag, and trekked to Canada to start the world afresh.

With General Botha Premier of the Transvaal, and the old sores scabbed over, it is permissible to roam over the events of the war we are so fast forgetting. There are many points worth recalling—the thoughtful Republics waiting for the grass to grow green on the *veldt* and *karoo*, our own Treasury hesitating to find

money to prepare for a war that all hoped to avoid, and the excitement in England when at last British patience was exhausted and the order to mobilise had gone forth. These alone are worthy of memory, and are lessons redolent of the value of the initiative and the set-back that parliamentary government gives its army in the matter of a strong gambit.

Then another sidelight—the sturdy old general who said that a war in South Africa appeared to him an immense calamity to be avoided at all honourable costs, but ‘If there is war I am going to give old Kruger a d—d good licking’; and that was how he appreciated the situation.

Let us roam, not to the main points that have been so oft rewritten, but to the sidelights. The speculation in the old colony of what the ‘Farmers’ would do—mark the old term that had some feeling that the Republics fought for freedom, and not, as they knew later, for ‘the old kings.’ The term soon dropped out, but it held for a month or so in Bechuanaland, and no one used another. Then think of all the good folk who sat on the fence—old Dirk Coetse of Weltevrede, in the district of De Aar, and the like, who had two sons in the Cape Police and one with the Fouriesburg commando, and was going to play either card as the war might run. Or how down in Natal, the Zulu prayed for a share in the white man’s war and was properly snubbed for his pains, while the old Colonist talked of Majuba and wondered if ‘Loyalty would pay.’ Then turn to the history of the War of Independence and see how the same spirit ran, and how brother was against brother and father against son, and you will realise how on the borderland, all along the Orange and down to Prieska and Kenhaart, men’s hearts were torn. Torn the more, too, because there was the doubt, and a fair doubt by all precedent, as to whether the old country would be true to herself; in fact, to use the term of the country, as to what ‘Downing Street’ would do. It is good to think that we finally did come up to expectations, and those who only saw the country in the full swing of the war will hardly realise how the face of public opinion and apprehension changed in the first six months. How wild with excitement went the real English—not those with English names and long shambling limbs and Dutch mothers, but the real English from King William’s Settlement—as the first British troops steamed up over the Karoo. Or how, as more and more troops, and more and more guns came up, the English Afrikaner

realised that England, after all, had more might than lay on the sea alone.

The Highland corps in Cape Town and the other local volunteer corps pining for the front, kept only to guard the rail through a couple of thousand miles of British and titularly loyal country, cheering the troop trains, and the knots of scowling or silent farmers watching the same and praying for the Republics, were good strong lights to catch.

Then came the invasion from the two Republics, the desire of the leaders to treat the inhabitants well, and the difficulties of so doing with an undisciplined army. The bitter taunts that fell from the invaders, and the impotent fury of the English women left behind. Then the proscribing of the English tongue and Cronje's gruff order, 'The Taal and nothing but the Taal' in Bechuanaland, and the proclamations of annexation. The bitter lesson was so well learnt, that the year the war was over Natal then and there passed a law that every able man should serve his country, a lesson and an example to all the Empire: an example seemingly that only those will follow who know the iron heel. To be trampled out for generations by the invader, as in the Rhenish provinces, is to understand what universal service really stands for.

And all the while the Dutch commandos poured over the frontiers and the British gave back or stood at bay, and all the world wondered, and men 'ran about,' to quote the Great Commoner, crying, 'What can we do for our country?' forgetting that they had always refused to learn. It is good to look back on those days when for the first time for a generation we again had to differentiate between the things that matter and the things that don't.

Let us turn awhile to memories of the leaders on both sides, to some of the red-letter days and to the big black days when everything went wrong, and the *Daily Mail* called for the blood of generals, and only the army didn't care. We and the good Russians are akin in the *Nitchevo* spirit, that puzzles the rest of Europe and all Asia. We need not dwell on the big generals, on the devotion of the rank-and-file to Sir Redvers Buller, the typical Englishman, nor on General Hart leading the third-class shot by the ear to an ant-hill whence even *he* might hit his target, nor on 'P. B. T.' himself, confident and cheery and picturesquely blasphemous, with that power to 'talk a bit' that is

usually connected with Number One of a first-class cruiser. Nor of Lord 'Methewen' and his stiff upper lip, for these are all household tales. It is of the lesser leaders that it is good to speak: 'that Remington' beloved of vrows, or old father B., him of the iron-handed prod, who in the mess-up at Schuipers' Nek smacked the face of one of his own men for shooting the wrong way, to find it was one of the enemy, and then pulled clear, unconcerned always, to hunt De Wet in the old Colony as he had not been hunted before. The Guillemot, too, will be remembered from Jagersfontein to Ramah Springs and back again, and his friends the Rechter Hertzog, and Willie and Munich his brothers, and the traps they laid for each other in the Genadeberg and the Joostenberg, that failed a dozen times for one grand *coup*. Of Damant, the terror of spies and stray commandos, or of Driscoll erstwhile of Mandalay, and then commander of a mixed corps of Yankees and Dutchmen and Cape Town corner-boys, a born leader under fire, with a soft heart that any petticoat could wheedle. Some may remember, too, his German quartermaster and the story of the 'Trompeeter, you damfool trompeeter, I did not mean mit your mouth the lights blow out, but mit your trompet the lights outblauw, so.'

But the stories are not all on one side, for there was Charles Nieuhoudt, who drove the donkey engine at Koffyfontein mine till he became a leader of horse, and rose to fame by scuppering the garrison of Jacobsdaal as, English-like, they slept in their beds unguarded in the market square. A century ago he might have been a Marshal of France. Or of Mr. Kritzinger, the 'very nice gent,' who was a rebel but behaved like a *sahib*, and cut the rail and the blockhouse line times without number, and would have stirred the whole Colony to rebellion. But the pitcher went to the well once too often, and he struck that portion of a blockhouse line where His Majesty's Guards were very wide awake, to find himself wounded and stuck in a wire fence. Or Olivier, who made a mistake that a general staff might have been proud of, counting hostile heads on the baker's tally, to find that an hour before he attacked, thrice the number of khakis had glided in, on two silent trains.

But for one commandant killed or captured there were twenty likely lads eager to take his place, each one more tiresome than his forerunner, for there are many fish in the sea. In place of Jouberts and Oliviers and Kritzingers and Bothas came

Brands and Hertzogs and Coetezees and Vander Merwes just as in any other army.

To see the real old Dutch, of quaint ignorance and stubborn ways, it needed the great De Wet inroad to the Colony, with the rush of British columns in pursuit, penetrating to quaint old quince-hedged towns that never saw an Englishman year in year out, and did not know if King George or King William ruled now in England and cared less. Very indignant they were at the British daring to tramp their Colony; and very difficult gentlemen to deal with, because a British subject is a British subject till you catch him red-handed in doing anything to the contrary; but then a Dutchman is not a man who is likely to be caught out in a hurry.

Here parts of the country were wholly tribal, and inter-marriage so much of the rule that the long list of dead infants on the illuminated coffin schedule in the sitting-room totalled two-thirds of the birth entries in the big Dutch family Bible. One whole valley, for a hundred miles and more, spawned Terblanches and Delareys almost since the days of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, who preserved little of their nation of origin save eyes and natural manners. Down by the Knapzak Rivier they would be all Du Ploys or Du Plessis, the latter including among them the rightful Duc de Richelieu, who a hundred years earlier, already a Dutchman, had refused Napoleon's offer of restored title and estates; all disloyal to the core, obstinate and uninstructed, but Dutchmen and not Dagos.

Then the eternal feminine, from the lovely to-all-appearance wholly-English girl of a Capetown Mynheer family, who could tempt secrets out of any but the toughest old pistol, to the plump missy in the blue kappie who cuddled secrets out of subalterns, just as Southern ladies in Washington cuddled out Northern secrets. The enemies of the British in those days were varied, even to the most mountainous vrow who took to her bed with the family rifles as the column came along, and shrieked rape and murder when some cunning colonial soldier insisted on turning the blankets down to see.

Tramping the old Colony for rebels who were always in the next parish, till they found you snoozing, when they unaccountably appeared in the next field; escorting donkey waggons out to feed garrisons in the Rockyveldt; teaching English horses to chew karroo bush in the Nieuveldt; giving the Bastard Police a lead after broken Free Staters; picking up the debris of a scuppered

patrol: thus the war rolled on, north and south till Boer and Briton lost all count of years and time itself.

Away down on the Zulu border the war rolled otherwise, fierce commandos, desperate at all that war deprived them of, fiercely attacking blockhouses and dynamiting trains, or raiding Zulu cattle till even the strict British magistrates winked at Zulu reprisals, and straight-driven blockhouse lines, with steady firm-knit driving lines, wore out the moral petrol.

It was early in the struggle that the Burgher found that somebody had blundered, and that the *roinek* soldier was a khaki and not a *roibatje*, and, further, did not wear clean white belts to shine in the morning sun. The sight of the advancing lines over the veldt below the kopjes at Belmont and Elands-laagte was perhaps the first intimation that the chunk was hugely beyond his chewing powers, whereon, to everyone's confusion, except perhaps those who had read the war for the Independence of the Spanish Netherlands, the brother refused to see when he was beaten. So John Bull, with appreciation in his heart, sat down to trample out war and resistance as, when you come to bed-rock, all war must be trampled out, from the days of the Roman Empire to the Norman Conquest and the Wars of the Palatinate to that of the Afrikander Bond.

Now, if ever anyone says that John Bull cannot see a thing through to its bitter end, and has lost the art of getting angry, there are just two instances to quote, and those are Neil's avenging column at Cawnpur or Sidney Cotton at Peshawur only fifty years ago, and the relentless carrying out of the Boer War. So relentless and so thorough was this, that but for the kindly way in which the relentless treatment was meted out to a recalcitrant stiff-necked people, who did not know when they were beaten, there was little change from the days of Wallenstein and Tilly.

It is not necessary to toss babes on to bayonets in order to strip a country as locusts strip an Eastern garden, or as the British stripped the country of a people who began by annexing the freeman's territory and thought they could tire the English out. Never has the iron entered into the soul of a people as did the war to the stubborn Dutch, who began in derision and contempt and ended in despair and self-respect. And as the soul of the Burgher went through the fire, the heart of the British went out to another race that never knew when it was beaten.

Some thoughts, too, may be given to the rank and file of both



sides. First of True Thomas, who shone as well, and perhaps even better, than his forebears ever shone, the educated, obedient, and devoted soldier, who needed not the cat and the triangles to keep him from lust and drink. Citizens, and not scallywags, but with all the discipline and *elan* of the men that fought at Minden. There has never been an English army like to that which melted away at the end of the war—an army of bronzed war-trained veterans of a level age, after close on three years of ample meat feeding in the finest climate in the world. Nor must we forget the benefit to the race in the death of all the weakly men for whom the strain was too great, nor the gain in the chest expansion of the undersized lads in Line and Militia, who, worked gently and fed freely for perhaps the first time in their lives, expanded into men who will leave their mark on the next two generations.

The tale of 'Arry 'Otspur the Yeoman is now hackneyed, but one point is worth remembering when we talk of veterans. Six months' war teaches as much as six years' peace, and the veterans of the First Empire were veterans in experience more than in age.

It was the fashion to talk disparagingly of the second five-bob-a-day contingent of Yeomanry, but the counter and the stable, and the box-office and the telephone bureau, do not yield ready-made soldiers. The trouble was not with the men, but with the nation and the circumstances which demanded men without allowing time for training. At the end of six months' work in the field under good officers, those same gentlemen of the counter and office stool could shoot and ride and see as red as any light cavalry that you could ask for, which they would not have learnt in as many years of sentry-go.

Of the first lot of Yeoboys there is little to recall that all the world does not know, but the tale of the old sergeant-major who came out with the first contingent and re-engaged for the second may not be amiss. He, like the rest of the world, saw that the second lot were not the same as the first, and bemoaned it accordingly. Specially did he remark on the difference in class between the rank and file of his two corps. 'Ah, sir,' he would say, 'they was a fine lot, gen'lmen too, most of them, and that obedient. Take my orderly room clerk now, a decent quiet respectable body—he was a Member of Parliament.'

Many a tale of the oversea Colonial would be worth the telling. Lawless men some, with a large respect for what they were pleased to call the Imperial officer, as soon as they found him a man of



parts, reckless of their own lives and cruel hard on their horses—never likely to lose themselves, but hard to keep to the chalk line. Canadians who complained of our trying English accent and sang their chorus of 'What the hell do we care?' when things went wrong, and who'd hang the Provost Marshal himself if he were too tiresome. Tall, fine horsemen from Sydneyside, with a fine taste for whiskey; and quiet, lithe men from New Zealand, who did as much work as any and talked far less, who one and all couldn't abide the Boer who sniped and then hid in his oven, but would bake him in it for his pains as soon as not, or sooner.

If there were fine wild troops on one side, the farmers had their own hard-bitten lot too. Manie Botha's lads in the East, to Polly Marais' Scouts in the West, each one clothed in a British officer's jacket and cloak for his own personal vanity, like a French Hussar of the First Empire. Or the daring disciplined Zarps, who fought as the regular soldier fights, with the same combination of discipline and veldtercraft that made the Cape Mounted Rifles such splendid troops. Or the rebel lads that followed Schuipers from his store in Colesberg for sheer devilment till he was shot as a renegade, and a fighter beyond the pale. And Cherry Emmet, too, who led a hundred implacable Vryheid lads for memory of his grandfather, hanged, as rebel, on College Green.

Then the end of the long struggle:—the British, who had outlived their weariness and had settled down to a steady trek groove and a five years' war, as they had done fifteen years before in Burma, astonished to find that the turn in the lane had come when they had ceased to look for it, or think about it at all:—the surrenders of the ragged commandoes, with the few remaining women, starving and anæmic, cursing the Boer generals as they passed their hovels, for an end that they could have had a year and a half earlier and escaped the fruitless pain:—the enthusiasm with which the brethren went the whole hog, taking the oath of allegiance and spontaneously cheering the King, and buying at the first town coronation brooches to wear in their hats:—all quaint and significant reminiscences that it is not good to forget. Then, too, the cheery scenes when the commissioners for surrenders arrived with wagons ostensibly loaded to feed the half-starved Burghers, but also to remove promptly and the more decently the piled rifles and bandoliers. Some may remember the scene in a town in the Western Transvaal, and the old Boer who saw the humour of the situation. Full of British rum, and

urged to his home by wife and fellow Burgher, he protested at such interference: 'Lemme be, lemme be. I'm Bri'ish subjec'! I'm Bri'ish subjec'!' It told to those who listened and laughed that perhaps the scars of war would soon heal, and, as old President Brand used to say, 'Alles zal recht kom.'

The end was good to think of then, and the army wondered how they had trekked and tramped, day in day out, so long. The brother had lived in tatters and leather for over a year and more, and drunk burnt wheat for coffee, with hardly a girl left on the veldt to talk to, the which was no light trial to him. And then came the prophets, who said it must all begin again if the British were fools enough to trust them, and others who said a war of extermination with the blacks must at once ensue, till no prophecy was too wild to hear in the bars on the Rand. And the Burgher returned to his ruined farm to endeavour to scrape together a living, and wait till the prisons returned the captives from the thirty-two points of the compass, and the women sorted themselves out from the rest-camps, or, as often happened, re-arranged themselves. Those countries which have been through a devastating war have found that war of that sort absolutely wipes out for the time being the laws of man, and perhaps those of God, so that the country settling down again finds many contracts abrogated and many slates wiped clean.

So it has now perhaps come about that the Dutch of the two Republics have realised that, if they be of truth the chosen people, their destiny is not to be worked out in the way they had planned for themselves. It is hard to have sung the *Gloriamur* and the *Quare fremuerunt* in the full belief that the Lord of Hosts was on their side in the flesh. Hard to feel at last that the preachers were wrong, and that if the Afrikander Dutch are to be a great race it is not to be by road of victory in arms. Hard to have to sing *Non Nobis Domine* out of the same old Psalter whence they had sung the hymns of praise for the glorious victories on the Tugela and Magersfontein heights.

Yet, if General Louis Botha speaks straight, as all believe he does, and if his people follow his lead, then as part of a great free nation, freer than ever the farmer on his veldt, the Dutch will be content to share in the Empire on which the sun never sets, and work out their own salvation with another folk who never know when they are beaten. The Old Hundredth, too, is a chant that Boer and Briton can both sing, in the hour of their joint prosperity.

### *THE FOOTPRINT ON THE SAND.*

TOM CAUSEY, a spaniel, and two terriers of uncertain breed were watching Joe Gamerton, the cobbler of Bidecombe, in Devon, as he hammered the iron 'clou' on the heel of a boot in a little shop of Coldharbour Lane, which leads down to the quay. They watched, not because they had any boots which wanted mending, nor any business at all to occupy them in the shop, but out of sheer idleness and the need of society. Tom Causey was by nature a social man, and of the number of those whose society is always entertaining. By profession he was rat and rabbit-catcher to all and sundry who required such services, or assistance in them, on their farms—a fact which sufficiently explains the spaniel and two terriers. In person he was broad and burly, with a wide red face, and narrow eyes sunken in his head between rolls of fat flesh. Fringes of grizzling hair made a frame for this round red face. His nose, like the face, was round and red, as of a man who was generous in quenching a frequent thirst. His coat was of velveteen, stained by much contact with Mother Earth as he worked his ferrets, by much of the honourable blood of the slain, and by exposure to all sorts of weather. It had voluminous flaps, with pockets constructed of a liberal width and depth, so that no matter how many rabbits he had stowed away in them there was always room for just one more. His breeches stuff was a corduroy, of as many various shades as his coat itself, a pair of weather-beaten leathern leggings meeting it. His hat, somewhat green and greasy, was a wideawake which had once been black, and in its prime might have been worn with decorum by a parson. Beneath it his dark, grizzled locks crept out in little ringlets. There were ringlets, also, of some base yellow metal in his ears, bored at a time when he fancied that such adornment would add to his attractions, which might conceivably have been considerable, for the ladies. His waistcoat buttons were of bright brass, and a watch-chain of the same gay metal lay across it. A horn dog-whistle hung by a piece of stout cord from the buttonhole of the velveteen coat. Across his shoulders was slung a bag containing ferrets, among others that most notorious and very large

'string ferret,' Belzy, well known to fame in all the countryside; and in his hand he carried a strong ashen staff terminated at the foot by an iron spud. It was designed for the homely use of digging out ferrets which had 'laid up' with a nest of young rats or rabbits, or with an adult rabbit which had the queer taste to prefer being eaten alive to bolting. Thus armed and equipped, the rabbit-catcher made a formidable and something of a Falstaffian figure as he stood blocking the evening sunlight from the door of the cobbler's shop.

As for the cobbler, it would be a superfluous compliment to describe him in any such detail—a little spare man, inconspicuously garbed, with the complexion of one who works in a close atmosphere, and whose chief beverage is from the bowl which does not inebriate and only cheers to a moderate degree. He was as marked a contrast with the other as you could expect to find.

'And who be they vor?' asked Causey, referring to the boots, after the merits, in their various kind, of the dogs had been spoken of enough.

'They'm Gearge Rimehouse's. It be scan'alous, sure enough, 'ow 'ee do wear the zoles off mun, trap'sin' along th' old river bank.'

Causey had been lounging in the doorway with the slackened muscles and pose of a man who has nothing to do but let the hours flow by him as they will. Even his great burly frame was tired by a long day after the rabbits, and he had still a tramp of a mile and a half before he would reach his ramshackle old cottage standing above the river in the few fields of which he managed to retain the tenancy in spite of a chronic backwardness with the rent. Nevertheless, as he heard the name of Rimehouse there came over his whole figure a certain change of attitude which Gamerton, the cobbler, must have noticed if he had lifted his eyes from the boot soles. It was the change from the loose listlessness of indifference to the keen tautness of aroused attention. His slack jowl and lips tightened up, and the little eyes twinkled in their slits between the rolls of flesh. For all that, there was in his tone a studied indifference as he answered, after a moment's pause:

'Gearge Rimehouse's! Be they, zure enough?'

George Rimehouse, the river-watcher, had the office of patrolling, in the joint interests and at the joint expense of several different riparian owners, some five or six miles of the river above Bidecombe

town, in order to see that no nefarious deeds were done in the way of poaching the salmon, to attend to the fences, stiles, bridges and footpaths, and generally to take cognisance of anything that went at all amiss, whether due to the hand of man or nature, along the river bank. He was a conscientious man, from South Devon. They said in the north that he did not understand their ways, which were, no doubt, difficult of comprehension for one not to the manner born. But it is possible that those riparian owners showed wisdom in their generation when they imported from another district this guardian of their fishy property.

Following Tom Causey's comment on the boots being for Rimehouse, and the slight stiffening to attention with which he received the name, there came a pause for a moment in the conversation, which was broken only by the cobbler's hammering on the iron 'clou.' Then the rabbit-catcher said, with no seeming relevancy :

'It be easy work, zure enough, 'ammerin' in them nails, same as you'm doin' now.'

'It bain't main difficult for them as be used to it,' the cobbler asserted, rather grudgingly, as if jealous for the art of his trade.

'Tis work as I deu for myself most times,' Causey declared, 'ammerin' in them nails.'

'Like enough,' was the cobbler's dry reply.

There was another trifling pause, and then Causey said :

'Deu 'ee ever 'ave a mind, Joe, for draw your teeth into a rabburt?' At the mention of the word the three dogs evinced a stiffening of attention rather similar to that of their master at the name of Rimehouse.

The suggestion had an attraction for the cobbler also. He paused in his work to give an expectant glance at his visitor. 'I be main fond of a rabburt. 'Ees fai', I be,' he answered.

'Well, then,' said Causey, probing one hand into the profundities of one of his coat pockets, 'tis a rabburt as I've a mind vor give 'ee, Joe. See, there's a beauty, 'ee be,' dragging one forth as he spoke, and stroking the ruffled fur of the dead creature into a semblance of sleekness ; 'a vine rabburt vor dinner, zure enough. But 'tis on'y supposin' as you'm minded vor deu me a sarvice, Joe,' he continued significantly.

'I be main obliged to 'ee, Tom, and zo I be,' said the cobbler gratefully. 'An' what be the sarvice as I can deu vor 'ee?'

'Tis no more'n jist rin up to the "Ring o' Bells" and vetch

down a little dogue as I've aleft there, 'case the tax-collector come roun' to my 'ouse vor ask the licence vor un. 'Ee'th made 'ees call on'y yesterday, zo I can 'ave un 'ome agin.'

'An' zo I will, an' welcome,' the cobbler said heartily, leaving his work at the word, and proceeding to put on his coat to go on the errand.

'An', time you'm gone, I may all zo well be fixin' in the nails to them there boots vor 'ee, zo as you'll vind mun done, time you come back.'

'Thank 'ee kindly, Tom. You may all zo well deu that as sit still and deu nothin'.'

No sooner had the cobbler gone than Tom Causey set himself to work with a surprising industry on the task he had undertaken. Laying the bag of ferrets beside him on the floor, he hammered the nails in diligently, taking a special pride, as it appeared, in arranging them in a peculiar fashion, of his own devising, about the toe. When he had finished his task on the one boot he applied himself with similar diligence to the other. He worked with a feverish energy, as though he deemed it a point of honour to have the nailing of the boots completed before his emissary could have gone to the 'Ring of Bells,' the public at the head of the town, and be back with the unlicensed dog. When all the nails were driven home he had not yet finished all he had to do; for, still with the same singular haste, he tore two large pieces from a sheet of the Bidecombe 'Weekly News,' which he had chanced to find in the shop, and pressed one piece carefully over the sole of the left foot and the other as carefully over the right in such a way that the imprint of the nails was recorded accurately on each. When he had done that he heaved a heavy sigh, as of a man whose task is fairly accomplished, folded the pieces of paper neatly, and bestowed them in another of the many pockets of his coat from that which was the common receptacle of the rabbits. Then he went to the doorway and resumed his former air of *otium cum dignitate*, awaiting the return of the master of the shop.

Within a very few minutes the cobbler reappeared, bearing in his arms a singularly ill-favoured specimen of a broken-haired fox-terrier, which the other dogs received with much blandishment as a long-lost brother.

'A be'uty, bain't 'ee, zure enough?' said Tom Causey, regarding him with pride. 'An' as for them there boots, I've a-fitted mun up with the nails proper, an' zo I 'ave.'



'An' zo you 'ave, zure enough,' the cobbler assented. 'Tis a vunny little pattern as you've a-made of mun about the toe, bain't it?' he added a little doubtfully.

'There be wan thing,' said Causey impressively, taking no notice of this criticism. 'You bain't on no account vor tell Gearge Rimehouse as 'twas me as 'ad the nailin' of mun. 'Twouldn't be proper like, seein' as they was left vor you.'

'You'm right, Tom,' Gamerton averred, recognising the scrupulous delicacy of feeling which prompted the caution. 'You may go bail as I'll never tell 'un. Well, good-night to 'ee, Tom,' as Causey made a move to be going. 'Good-night to 'ee, and thank 'ee kindly for the rabburt.'

Rimehouse, the river-watcher, might have been seen a few weeks later sitting by the river bank, the worst puzzled man in North Devon. The place where he sat was a very beautiful one, specially designed, as one might fancy, to be the scene of a poet's reveries, with the well-wooded cliff coming almost sheer down behind to meet the white sand washed up by the water into a little semicircular bay, and the river itself purling away in front with sparkling flashes of foam as it leapt over the rocks and deep amber translucencies where it flowed unbroken. The reverie, however, which absorbed the river-watcher was not at all a poetical one; its subject was of the first practical importance. He was, in fact, in the engrossed study of a footprint, which engaged all his attention. It is a picture which may readily recall an historical one in a story still more widely known to fame than this, although the present story is a sufficiently well-known one in North Devon. Robinson Crusoe regarding the naked footprint on the sand of what he had hitherto believed to be his solitary island could not have been more strikingly arrested by its appearance than was Rimehouse by the print of which he was now endeavouring to decipher the significance. Unlike the impression which had so thrilling an effect on Defoe's illustrious derelict, this was the impression of a booted, not of a naked foot. More than that, it was the impression of a heavily-nailed and iron-shod boot, such a boot as any rustic of the countryside might be expected to wear. But what gave it its arresting significance in the eyes of Rimehouse was that its nails were distributed exactly in the peculiar arrangement of the nails in the pair of boots which he had recently had repaired by Joe Gamerton the cobbler in the town of Bidecombe—



the very pair, as it so happened, which he was wearing at the moment when the startling impression first presented itself to him.

At first sight it might not seem obvious why Rimehouse should be so badly perturbed by the appearance of one of his own footprints, for it was his daily habit and business to perambulate the banks of the river from one end to the other of the beat over which his watching extended, so that the print of his footsteps imbedded on any part of it which was impressionable had in general no reason to cause him any surprise. But the fact which gave to this particular impression its strange and inexplicable interest was that he felt morally certain that he had not set foot on this particular white-sanded bay on the day before, and that two nights previously a lashing rain had fallen which would certainly, unless all his former experience misled him, have washed out from the soft sand the impression of even so large a foot as his. The day before he had contented himself with walking along the upper path, above the wooded cliff which formed the real bank of the river at this point, and had never come down to the actual level of the shore. Yet here, before his eyes, was proof which seemed positive that he must, waking or sleeping, have descended to the very edge of the water; and since he had no memory of doing so in his waking state he began to discuss in his mind the possibility that he had come thither in his sleep. He had heard stories of somnambulistic performances of the kind, of which the sleeper was quite unconscious when he awoke. On the whole, however, he was inclined to reject this ingenious hypothesis, for the sound reason that he had never hitherto convicted himself of any such unnatural proceeding, and after musing for the best part of half an hour over the puzzle presented to him by the footprint, continued on his way down the river, leaving the mystery still unsolved and constantly recurring to his mind.

He had further troubles to annoy him. Until the heavy rain of the night before last there had been a drought, quite unusual in that humid climate for some weeks past and the river had fallen abnormally low. It was a time when every fish in every pool could be seen quite clearly, so that the watcher knew exactly how many there should be in each, for salmon do not change their quarters when the water is in this low state. Yet constantly as he came to examine the pools he would find a fish or two missing. None of the pools was ever recruited by a new inmate, so he could be pretty confident that the fish had not

departed from their usual habits and run into a higher pool from a lower or drifted down; indeed the lowness of the water made it hardly possible for them to do so. There was no doubt that someone or something was taking out the fish. He suspected otters; but could find no signs of them either in the form of tracks or of any half-eaten remains of fish. He had looked with care for the traces of any fresh human footprints on any of the soft places on the margins of the pools, but never was able to find any but his own, which were the more unmistakable on account of the singular manner in which the nails had been set in his boots by the cobbler of Bidecombe. The river-watcher had an uneasy sense that things were going against him; he had even the feeling that there was something 'whisht' as he expressed it to himself (which means in the Devonian tongue something of an uncanny character) happening, that had come to its culmination in this unaccountable footprint of his which he had found in a place where it seemed impossible that he could have impressed it in any natural way. The problems of his life appeared too hard for him.

There is that about this story of Rimehouse which seems to connect him psychologically with the great astronomers. One of the several riparian owners in whose interest he served had been inspired to present him with a watcher's telescope, a plain but efficient instrument such as is used by the gillies or stalkers on the Scottish hills. It was something of a new toy to Rimehouse, and as he sat on a high bluff overlooking the river, about a mile or so further than the spot at which he had perceived the disquieting footmark, he pulled out his glass and tried to divert his attention from the puzzle which was perplexing him by following, through the telescope, all that was visible of the river. And as he so looked through it, there 'swam into his ken,' as the stories of astronomical discoveries have it, not, indeed, a new planet or a comet, but the figure of a man sitting down and curiously bent over and contorted. Had it not been—so Rimehouse always declares in his frequent repetitions of the story—that his mind at the moment was greatly occupied with boots, he would probably have been quite at a loss to conceive what the man could be doing, but, obsessed as he was with the puzzle of the footprint, the true significance of the attitude struck him at once—the man was changing his boots! No sooner had his sagacious brain received this vivid impression than it was immediately followed by another

—namely, that the bank of the river was a very singular place to choose for this thoroughly domestic action. Not that the change was in process of operation in any exposed spot, although by a curious coincidence Rimehouse's telescopic sight had fastened on it from so great a distance. On the contrary, so far as he could judge, it was extremely sheltered, in a kind of arbour formed by the surrounding boscaje; and perhaps from no other place than that occupied by Rimehouse would it have been open to observation from without, and from any man's natural vision unaided by a telescope it would have been quite invisible even there. Nevertheless, in spite of this comparative privacy the spot appeared to Rimehouse a curiously chosen one for an act which is much more commonly performed at home.

He held his glass glued with firm precision on the man thus singularly occupied. In a few moments the change, as it appeared, was completed, and the man, still under his observation, stood up. The figure, even at that distance, was familiar, not to be mistaken—Tom Causey! The next moment he had taken a step which interposed a screen of foliage between himself and the telescope, but Rimehouse had seen enough; he shut up the glass with a click, and went striding at his best pace down the hill.

He was a long, lank man, black-bearded, with loose limbs, which took him over the ground at a great speed. His figure did not carry much promise of strength, but those who had tried a fall with him at the Devonshire wrestling had reason to remember the unexpected wiriness of his muscle and his grip of steel. In a boxing-booth at Barnstaple fair he had knocked out the professional champion, not by any great mastery of the science of the noble art, but by the immense length of his arm, which reached the opponent's face, while the other's fist came nearly six inches short of his own. He did not know as yet what he might find when he arrived at the spot where he had perceived Tom Causey making this remarkable change of his footgear, but the prospect of a rough-and-tumble fight crossed his mind as a very possible eventuality, and, big though Causey was, he did not quail from it. He did not make the mistake of wasting any time in trying to discover the direction in which Causey might have gone. He assumed, however, that the river would be the objective, and with a careful note in his mind of the exact bearings of the spot where the change of boots had been accomplished, made a slight detour inland, and came straight down upon it from the side remote from the river.

He had located the place with accuracy by its proximity to a tall ash, which is not a very common tree in North Devon, and presently stood on the very spot where he had watched the unsuspecting Causey through his far-seeing glass. All the impressions of the ground bore witness to the justice of his conclusion that the man he had seen had been changing his boots. The grass was laid where the man had sat, there were the marks of the boot-heels in a sandy patch, the boots which had lately been taken off were lying scarcely hidden by a tussock. Thrusting his hand into one of them, Rimehouse found it yet warm from the heat of the foot which it had lately held. With his hand still stuck thus into the great boot, his figure froze and stiffened with intent astonishment for the second time that day at sight of a footprint in the sand—again his own footprint, with that singular pattern of the nails around the toe, and again in a place where he knew that he had not set foot.

He stood and stared, and again that chill sense that 'whisht' things were about came over him; but it endured only for a short while. By degrees the intentness of his look relaxed, as a dawning intelligence of the meaning of it all came to him. He even smiled to himself, between anger and amusement, as a full conviction reached him of how he had been fooled.

'Tom Causey,' he said, speaking softly to himself, 'you be a master vagabone, you be.'

He meditated a moment as if uncertain how best to deal with this 'master vagabone,' in whose hands he felt himself to have been a fool and plaything. The sight of the great boot still in his hand seemed to bring inspiration. He picked up its fellow, and crept back with the pair into the bushes. Then he searched about until he found a tree of blackthorn, off which he broke a small twig or two. He felt the thorns, like a connoisseur; they were sharp and strong. He selected two of the twigs which bore, close together, on an inch or two of their length, three or four of the finest specimens of thorn, and then he pushed them well home into the toes of the boots. He thrust them so far that not until the foot, forcing its way into the boot, had passed that crucial point at which the heel sticks hardest, and had gone with a thud well home into the boot, would it be conscious of the presence of the thorns at all. No doubt it was not quite a nice thing to do; but then Rimehouse was a South Devon man.

And having set his trap in this manner, he replaced the

boots where he had found them; then he ensconced himself once more within the bushes and waited for Tom Causey to return.

He had the best part of an hour to wait, but never thought of quitting his post. He felt as if he could sit there till the crack of doom, in anticipation of the rich joy which would be his when the big man changed his boots. Presently, with a quiet tread marvellous for a person of his bulk, and acquired only through the life-long habit of walking as if a sitting rabbit, to be pounced on, were immediately in front, Causey came from the river, parting the bushes with a right hand held high before his face; and in that right hand was something which might have suggested to Rimehouse, had his mind been in the imaginative mood, a gleaming sword. But that mood had passed from him; he had exhausted it in his dealings with the boots; and now, in the phase of hard practical observation, he saw the thing in Causey's right fist clearly for what it was—a salmon held by the tail. And at that his slow grin of expectation deepened—the enemy was completely delivered into his hands.

The broad face of Causey was very pleasant, too, with satisfaction as he sat down heavily, once more to change his foot-gear. His back, as he sat, was towards Rimehouse, who was watching him intently; but as he took off the first boot he threw it beside him carelessly in such a way that its sole was turned to Rimehouse, and he saw, as he knew that he should see, the nails arranged just in the pattern of those at his own boot's toe. Then Causey took up the other boot—that with the nails on the sole of the toe set in ordinary fashion, but with a certain quite novel arrangement of spikes in the inside of which even he, the owner of the boot, was still unconscious.

As Causey leant forward to put his foot into the boot, Rimehouse raised his face above the bushes to watch events. There was a moment's pause—that moment of effort while the heel was pushing past the tightest part where the upper of the boot goes round the ankle. Rimehouse just saw the big figure of the other make its first movement of relief and relaxing of the muscles as his heel went past this tight place; and then there came a sudden, wild-beast roar.

That was the signal for which Rimehouse had been waiting. He did not hurry himself, but went forward quietly with his long, louncing steps.

'Boots don't vit 'ee, I'm afeard, Tom,' he said, with pleasant sympathy.

He stooped with a seeming carelessness to pick up the salmon and the boot which Causey had just taken off; yet, even so, it seemed that he was on the watch against developments, for when Causey, with a big curse, hurled at his head the only boot still unappropriated he was quite prepared to dodge it, if dodging had been necessary. But it is difficult, with the best will in the world, to throw straight when one is sitting, and Rimehouse's head was in no danger.

'Thank 'ee kindly, Tom, vor that there. 'Twas jest that t'other boot as I was a-wantin' for make up the evidence like, when us comes bevoor the coort. Shall 'ope for meet 'ee again there soon, Tom.'

During these observations, of which Causey evidently appreciated the humour far less keenly than their author, the big man was writhing in an agony of mingled pain, fury, effort to get off the boot, and desire to get at Rimehouse. But it is hard for a man to pull off a boot quickly when several spikes at its toe are running into his foot with a keenness which causes him intense anguish in the attempt to get the foot into the position in which it can slip out of a boot easily; and when he is divided between this desire and an eagerness to be up and pursue an enemy he presents that spectacle of a good man struggling with adversity which has always been deemed supremely edifying to the gods. It was in this striking aspect that Causey now exhibited himself to the gratified appreciation of Rimehouse; but as for any remarks which he uttered, they are not to be repeated, for the reason that for the most part they were incoherent, in his rage and agony, and for the rest, not such as the young person should read. Rimehouse did his best for him, however, saying soothingly:

'I do beg 'ee, Tom, don't 'ee go work yourself into a vit; now don't 'ee. Ef you was vor burst yourself and die, as it do zeem to me main likely is what you mean vor do, bevoor you've a-got off that there boot which zeems vor vex 'ee, why maybe as volks might think as 'ow I was vor blame in it.'

'An' serve 'ee well right ef you was vor 'ang vor sech dirty trick as this yer, you scounnerel,' roared Causey, finding articulate voice for once.

'I reckon there's wan o' the present company of two as 'll 'ang avoor I shall, Tom,' said the river-watcher amiably. 'Gude-



bye to 'ee in the meantime. Us'll meet again soon in the coort, zure enough.'

And with this pleasant anticipation Rimehouse pushed his way through the bushes, carrying the salmon and the boots, leaving Causey at leisure, and at such peace as he could command, to extricate his foot from its horrid prison.

The denouement is obvious enough and simple. The salmon, by that time in a condition which made its presence known throughout the court, was produced with the boots before the magistrates at their next meeting, Causey himself being present in obedience to a summons. The fish showed signs of impalement by two of the big hooks of one of those three-hooked arrangements with which poachers commonly snatch salmon. Causey had cross-summoned Rimehouse for wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm, and had a huge piece of evidence in support of his plea in shape of his own foot swathed in enough bandages for a whole mummy, which he was disappointed in not being allowed to remove in order to show his toe to the court. The magistrates unsympathetically nonsuited him, on the ground advanced by Rimehouse that he had acted in virtual self-defence in putting the thorns in the boots, in order that Causey should be unable to attack and pursue him.

When sentence was pronounced—fine, with alternative of imprisonment—Causey produced the money then and there out of a black leathern purse, in court, with the pleasant wish that he 'opped as it might do the genelmen of the bench much gude.'

But though Rimehouse won the case, it is to be doubted whether the whole story did not make more for the credit of Causey, because of his ingenuity in nailing his boots on the pattern of Rimehouse's, in the eyes of all reasonable men of North Devon. They did not altogether like Rimehouse's action throughout the case. It was not so much the matter of putting the thorns into the boots that was objected to; that seemed all fair enough, because blackthorn was a common tree and grew everywhere, and, besides, it was noticed that Tom Causey walked a great deal better on his bandaged foot as soon as the case had been settled, although it had gone against him, than when he thought that he might have anything to gain by hobbling; but what people did not quite like was the telescope. That seemed to be taking an unfair advantage—hardly playing the game. But, then, Rimehouse, after all, was a South Devon man.

HORACE G. HUTCHINSON.



### *THE PERSONALITY OF EDWARD VI.*

It is melancholy to contemplate the destruction of bright hopes by the early deaths of those in whom such hopes were centred. In our own history there were two such mournful events—the deaths of Edward VI. and of Prince Henry Stuart. Both gave evidence of high character and remarkable ability, as well as of marked individuality, neither deriving anything from their evil paternity. One was the friend of Sidney, the other of Raleigh. Both took special interest in the advancement of commerce and in geographical discovery. Both were carried off when the highest hopes had been justly raised for their future by a misgoverned nation. In both cases the loss was disastrous.

In most histories the personality of the young King Edward VI. is more or less lost sight of in the narrative of the intrigues and blunders of Seymours and Dudleys. Mr. Froude, indeed, gives some account of Edward's writings and of his action with regard to the succession, but he merely looks upon him as a precocious boy. Edward was not precocious in any depreciatory sense. He was endowed with rare natural gifts, and was remarkably clever, as well as amiable and generous, but he was just as fond of sport and of games as other boys, as his journal proves.

His elder uncle Somerset, and the arrogant and quarrelsome Duchess, got complete charge of his person and kept him closely at his studies, which was right at his age. But he was also subjected to much hardship and annoyance, kept without money, and parted from his friends, while the squabbles of the Duchess with his attendants were a constant trouble. The relations he loved most were the Queen Dowager, his uncle Thomas Lord Sudeley, and his sister Elizabeth. He was never allowed to see them, and could only communicate with his favourite uncle by clandestine means. Then he saw his uncle Sudeley dragged from his mother's house by his own brother, imprisoned in the Tower, accused under many counts, some of which were connected with Edward himself, and beheaded by an Act of Attainder without trial. This would certainly tend to foster dislike for his fratricidal uncle, under whose control Edward remained for some months longer. At last

the Council resolved to depose Somerset from the position of Protector, and to take the business of the country into its own hands. It was high time. Somerset lost his head, and resolved upon a futile resistance. He was at Hampton Court, and determined to go to Windsor, where he thought he might hold out against the Council. At the time Edward was ill in bed, but he was forced to get up and ride through a cold autumn night to Windsor. It might have been the death of a delicate boy, and no doubt caused permanent injury to his health.

Somerset was well meaning and liberal-minded ; but his ambition far exceeded his abilities, and, like all the second-rate politicians who found favour with Henry VIII. during the last years of his life, he was grasping and unprincipled. He deserves credit for inducing the Parliament to repeal the cruel and tyrannical laws of the deceased tyrant. But he made a war with Scotland which entirely failed in its object ; he blundered into a war with France, neglected the payment of the debts of the former reign, made no serious attempt to restore the coinage, and his incapacity was bringing the country to the verge of ruin, when the members of the Council took the government into their own hands. Dudley and Herbert were by far the ablest men at the board, and began to lead the rest in important questions, with the titles of Duke of Northumberland and Earl of Pembroke.

Somerset was treated with leniency after a short imprisonment. He was restored to his seat at the Council, received an appointment at Court, and was made Lord-Lieutenant of two counties. The marriage, at this time, of Northumberland's eldest son to Somerset's daughter must be considered as a proof that the reconciliation was sincere, and that there was no sinister design against the former Protector. The Duchess was probably responsible for the worst acts of her weak husband, such as the death of his brother, the unfeeling treatment of his infant niece, and the disinherison of his eldest son by a former marriage. She was implicated in the final plot against the Council, which cost Somerset his life. She was rash and imprudent, as well as imperious and arrogant. With such an adviser failure was certain. Somerset was induced to enter into a conspiracy with soldiers of fortune who had served under him at Boulogne or in Scotland, to upset the existing Government. The young King was informed, and believed that worse crimes were contemplated, and Somerset confessed that, at least at one time, this was so. Unlike his

brother, he received a fair trial, and his execution cannot be considered unjust.

The reasons for young Edward's dislike of his elder uncle, and the events which led to the Protector's deposition and eventual death, have been referred to, because the only accusation that has ever been made against the boy King, except his alleged precocity, is founded on his conduct with regard to Somerset's death. Mr. Hallam and others have charged him with want of feeling because he entered an account of the proceedings against his uncle, and mentioned his death without remark in his journal, and in a letter to his friend Barnaby. Mr. Hallam thought that this showed too much of the Tudor in his character. When we remember that Edward must have bitterly resented the death of his uncle Sudeley, his own harsh treatment, and his belief, on sufficient evidence, that Somerset had been contemplating an atrocious crime, it is unfair to accuse the boy of want of feeling because he made the entries in his journal without any remark. It would have been wrong to write anything against his uncle, and he did not do so; but it would have been hypocrisy to use expressions of affection which he could not feel. Nothing from the bad Tudor stem is apparent in Edward's character. All that had descended to him through heredity came from the families of his two grandmothers, the Plantagenets and Wentworths; but the chief points in the boy's character were derived from his own individuality.

The fall of Somerset caused a complete revolution in the position of the young King, and it is only from this time that we are able to study his personality, and the extent to which it influenced events. Whether from policy or from a better motive, Northumberland invariably treated the King with respect, kindness, and consideration, bringing him prominently forward as sovereign, and consulting his wishes with regard to appointments about his person. Under these more favourable conditions, and with nearly three more years added to his age, the boy began to feel his great responsibilities very keenly, and to seek eagerly for the acquisition of the kinds of knowledge which would fit him to discharge the duties of a sovereign.

He began to write a journal in which he entered the events of the day, occurrences with which he was personally connected, as well as notes and remarks on various questions of administration, and the course of affairs in foreign countries as reported to him by his diplomatists.

In keeping a journal Edward followed the example, though doubtless without knowing it, of his famous ancestor, Jayme I. of Aragon, surnamed the Conqueror. The journal of Jayme I. is one of the most interesting productions of the thirteenth century, and it gives the true version of events, refuting slanders, when chroniclers would have left false impressions. The latter, to make a good story, tell us that, after the taking of Mallorca, Jayme made the Moorish king kneel, and pulled his beard—an unworthy and unknightly act. The King had never heard of the slander, but he gave a detailed account of what really happened. He received the Moor's submission himself, treated him with respect, and showed great kindness to his son. Would that some of our kings and knights had followed the excellent examples of King Jayme I. and of Edward VI., and had kept such journals; then we should not have heard so much of inhuman murders of children after battles, and of other fictions intended to make our blood creep. The stories of lying chroniclers would have been brought face to face with the truth, which now has to be sought for painfully and often fruitlessly.

But to return to the writings of our young King. His journal is invaluable as a source of information for forming a judgment on his character and his personality. Fortunately it does not stand alone. Other notes and essays written by him, or for him, have been preserved—on religious questions, on State affairs, on details of administration, on schemes for the reform of procedure in the Council, and on other matters of the same kind.

It is submitted that it is from the point of view of his own very remarkable personality that Edward's reign can most profitably be studied, taking the reign in the sections into which it most naturally divides itself.

Edward's writings enable us to see him as sovereign entertaining honoured guests and ambassadors; as a fervent and zealous member of the reformed Church of England; as a student of statesmanship and the work of administration; as a geographer and promoter of commercial enterprise; as a captain and leader of sport and of games; and as a warm and affectionate friend.

His bright, pleasing countenance and gracious manner added a peculiar charm to the ceremonies of State. We hear of the reception of Mary of Guise, the Dowager of Scotland, at Hampton Court, and of the great banquet at Westminster, when King Edward, surrounded by his councillors and officers of State,

received the Queen Dowager at the entrance hall, conducted her to the banquet, and seated her on his right hand. There was music, exchange of presents, and the Queen continued her journey after having received a bright impression of the grace and courtesy of her youthful host. King Edward entertained the French ambassadors, on the conclusion of peace, for a longer time. Besides banquets and musical entertainments, at which the King himself, who was a trained musician, played the lute, there were fireworks on the river, hunting parties at Hampton Court, and coursing in Hyde Park. The King in person acted as host on all these occasions. He sent the Garter to Henry II. of France, and was himself invested with the Order of St. Michael.

Edward was brought up in the Protestant religion. He was devout and religious by nature, and his writings prove that, like his cousin Jane Grey, he was a well-instructed theologian. In his time the Church of England, the purest branch of the Catholic Church, was constituted as it now is, and her beautiful liturgy was composed, mainly by Cranmer, to whom the world owes a deep debt of gratitude. The young King corresponded constantly with the Archbishop on this and other subjects, but the numerous letters were destroyed in Mary's time. Only two have been preserved. The Act of Uniformity of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments was passed in the fifth and sixth years of the reign, was repealed by Mary, but re-enacted in the first year of Elizabeth as it is now printed in our Prayer-books. This may be considered as the greatest and most beneficent and lasting measure of the reign of Edward VI. The young King took an active part in all the proceedings connected with it, exactly how influential and active the destruction of his correspondence with Cranmer prevents us from knowing; but we may feel sure that the young King's support and sympathy afforded help to the over-taxed Archbishop in his great work. Edward and his Court heard sermons from the celebrated preachers of the day, especially during Lent, practical and homely truths from old Latimer, eloquent exhortations from Ridley and others. His anxiety to give a Protestant complexion to rules and customs of ancient date led the King to appoint committees for the revision of the Statutes of the Order of the Garter. One copy of the revised statutes, in Latin, is entirely in Edward's handwriting, and there is another copy with annotations by the King.

The youthful sovereign took a deep interest in the practical work

of the Church of England, especially as regards education and the organisation of charity. Although it has been shown that all the grammar schools in Strype's list were not founded by Edward VI., some, including Christ's Hospital, certainly were. A 'Brevis Catechismus,' probably by Dr. Nowell, for the use of boys, was prepared at the King's instance; and there was much good work done for the furtherance of education. As regards charitable institutions, the King presented his own palace of Bridewell to the City of London, an event which is immortalised by the well-known pictures formerly attributed to Holbein.

Religion was part of the life of Edward VI. It impressed upon his mind the responsibilities into which he was about to enter, and the gravity of the duties he would be called upon to perform. But it was necessary to proceed with circumspection, in prosecuting his political studies, lest jealousy and suspicion should be aroused among the members of his Council. A very learned man, especially well versed in the Italian language and literature, was the Clerk of the Council. His name was Master Thomas, and he became a faithful and confidential friend of the King. Their communications with each other were conducted, to a large extent, through the intermediary of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, one of the gentlemen of the Privy Chamber. Throckmorton was endeared to the King as the faithful friend of his poor uncle, Lord Sudeley.

Master Thomas supplied Edward with abstracts of the proceedings of the Council, and prepared learned essays for his use on political questions as they arose. The King locked these precious papers up, in a chest by the side of his writing-desk, and always kept the key about his person. One of the questions in which young Edward took a deep interest was the restoration of the coinage: during the misgovernment of the last years of Henry VIII. it had been debased, no steps had been taken to remedy the evil, and the consequent distress and derangement of trade had become very serious; there are several entries on the subject in the King's journal, and Master Thomas wrote a treatise for him on the best means of raising the coinage to its proper value. Another source of anxiety was the paying off of the debts left by his predecessor. Edward also studied commercial questions, and the establishment of marts. His more general essay on the departments of government, comparing them with the parts of the body, is noticed in Mr. Froude's history. The King and Master Thomas had a comprehensive scheme for the reform of the procedure of



the Council of State. It was to be divided into committees, each dealing with one or more departments.

Edward VI. was thus preparing for radical reforms as soon as he attained his majority. His first measures were to be the restoration of the coinage to its proper value, the payment of the Crown debts, and the reform of the Council's procedure. We know what his own opinion of his councillors was, from two provisions of his will. He left his injunctions that no wars should be entered upon during a minority except in case of invasion, and that no State property should be appropriated.

Edward VI. believed that a sound knowledge of geography was a necessity for a statesman both in the conduct of negotiations and in the promotion of commercial enterprise. His view was correct; but it differs widely from that of our modern Foreign Office and Civil Service Commissioners. Edward was thoroughly well grounded as a geographer. His tutor, Sir John Cheke, constructed an astrolabe for him, and he had quadrants and watches. The map of the world, engraved by Clement Adams, hung in the corridor outside his study door. He had the most recent edition of 'Ptolemy,' which was the latest thing out. His tutor had charge of Leland's voluminous manuscripts describing the topography of England, so that he not only had a thorough knowledge of his own country but also knew the pilotage of all his ports and roadsteads, as well as those of Scotland and France.

Sebastian Cabot instructed Edward in terrestrial magnetism, and Cardanus, who was visiting England at the time, was astonished at the boy's learning, and said that he held his own in an argument about the nature of comets.

The young king desired to know more about the Levant and the Far East. Master Thomas, therefore, made an excellent translation for him of the travels of Josafa Barbaro in Persia. The practical result was that Edward lent two of his own ships to foster the Levant trade, and almost lived to see the despatch of the first voyage to Guinea, which was projected in his time.

The great geographical event of Edward's reign was the despatch of the first properly equipped Arctic expedition. The King worked through the intermediary of his intimate friend Henry Sidney, who induced the Company of Merchant Adventurers to undertake a voyage to Cathay by the north-east. The expedition consisted of three vessels under the command of Sir Hugh Willoughby. A follower of Henry Sidney, named Chancellor, commanded the



second ship, and the opening of a very lucrative trade with Russia, by the White Sea, was the practical result. Most Arctic expeditions have led to valuable practical results. The poor young King was taken ill while the expedition was being fitted out; but Sidney made an excellent speech to the adventurers. The ships sailed down the river when the King was a little better, just before the final relapse, and he was able to see them from a window of Greenwich Palace.

Edward was not precocious in the sense of thinking of nothing but studies and affairs of State. He thought quite as much as other boys of sport and games, and was keen at getting up competitions in tilting, shooting, running, and other events. The Lord Admiral prepared a grand show for him at Deptford, when a barge was built up as a castle and stormed by a fleet of little boats. He himself always arranged some sporting match whenever there was an excuse for it, such as the marriage of Robert Dudley with Amy Robsart, or the arrival of an ambassador. At Greenwich he got up some grand games, and, though he was not strong, he competed himself in some of the events. He was the winner in a running match, and thought he ought to have been at 'rovers.' He also arranged dressing-up games indoors, for two sides to tilt against each other. One set was Riches against Youth, another was Savage Almains against Friars. There was nothing very precocious in all this, but rather the usual pranks of a high-spirited boy with his comrades.

Edward's disposition was most affectionate, and he had the gift of attaching life-long friendships. Separated from the relations he cared for most, he won the devoted love of those around him. His accomplished tutor, Sir John Cheke, was in constant attendance on him from the time he was six years old, and there was a very warm attachment between them. Master Thomas was devoted to his young master. Among the gentlemen of his chamber, Sir Thomas Wroth, though much older, was a valued companion, Sir Henry Sidney was an intimate and very dear friend. But the friendship of Edward and young Barnaby Fitzpatrick, the Irish hostage, was the most remarkable. It exceeded that of David and Jonathan. Edward and Barnaby had been inseparable from early boyhood, working and playing together. It was a great wrench for the young King to lose his friend even for a time, but he felt that it would be for Barnaby's good to see something of the world. He was to go to Paris, living with the Ambassador Pickering, and, if

possible, seeing a campaign against the Emperor. The King created him Baron of Upper Ossory to give him a position at the court of Henry II., and, during his absence, Edward busied himself in securing and arranging for the management of the Irish estates of his friend.

The separation was keenly felt by the King. But it was a gain to posterity, for a charming correspondence between the two friends has been preserved. Soon after Barnaby's departure, the King commenced a progress, with a large attendance of officers of State, heralds, and servants. He visited several country houses in Hampshire, inspected the forts at Portsmouth, and proceeded to Southampton, Salisbury, and Winchester, returning to Hampton Court. He made a most favourable impression on the people during his progress, and high hopes were raised, alas ! so soon to be crushed. He seems to have felt that his health was declining, and he sent for Barnaby, saying that he could bear the absence of his dearest friend no longer. The letters show how the King looked after the comfort and welfare of his absent friend in every detail ; and there is one charming letter from Christchurch, in which Edward contrasts his own luxurious journey with Barnaby's dangers and hardships in his campaign against the Emperor.

In November the friends were united only to be parted again by death. The King's fatal illness became serious in the following April. He was surrounded by faithful and loving friends, Cheke, Wroth, Sidney, Barnaby, and one or two humbler but not less devoted servants. Every detail down to Edward's last moments is deeply interesting. Never was a King more dearly loved nor more deeply mourned. But the object of this article has been attained if it has shown that the chief feature of his reign should not be the intrigues of Seymours and Dudleys, but the young King's own remarkable personality.

CLEMENTS R. MARKHAM.

*THE CHRISTCHURCHMAN'S LAMENT.*

*A SOLILOQUY ON THE NIGHT OF MAY 30.*

(With occasional apologies to MATTHEW ARNOLD.)

How changed is every spot man makes, or unmakes !

In Northern Oxford nothing keeps the same,  
And here, in Christ Church meadows, when the sun makes

The Cher in summer worthy of its name,  
A mushroom growth, raised by a local agent,  
A mighty platform threatens the display  
Which uninstructed people call 'a pageant'  
(Though that, I think, is not the proper way).

Ladies, that punt beneath the cool-haired creepers,  
Each clutching her inviolable shade,  
Fail to observe the customary reapers  
Stand with suspended scythe in yonder glade ;  
Women they see, their hands upraised in cursing,  
Like Suffragists, beneath the eye of heaven,  
And these, they know, are characters rehearsing  
The culminating scene in Tableau VII.

Bumpkins, that came to hear the choir-boys carol  
From Magdalen Tower on May-day, stood and roared  
To see strange men in latter-day apparel  
March with umbrellas o'er the trampled sward :  
Perhaps those serried companies presented  
The loyal muster of King Charles's men,  
Perhaps, how undergraduates frequented  
Lectures—ah yes ! they still had lectures then.

Fain had I lived when Aelfred burnt the crumpets,  
Ere Berkshire knew the guile that haunts the gown  
Or when the sudden blare of Roundhead trumpets  
Would send a proctor flying round the town,  
Or when the Magdalen fellows, rusticated,  
Begged their precarious bread o'er lawn and lea,  
Then, harmless Indolence was never 'gated,'—  
But Time, not Indolence, has done for me.

Come, cross, my friends, the unpermitted ferry,  
Soon from the High will firemen's pumps come on,  
Soon we shall have the Oxford coster merry  
Charging us, here a bobby, there a don ;  
Achilles in his tent, the pageant-master  
Shall see young Hectors raising brands on high,  
And cease his boding presage of disaster,  
*Commem. is come, and with Commem. come I.*  
[*He plunges into the Cherwell.*

R. A. K.

AT LARGE.<sup>1</sup>

BY ARTHUR C. BENSON.

## I.

## THE SCENE.

Yes, of course it is an experiment! But it is made *in corpore vili*. It is not irreparable, and there is no reason, more's the pity, why I should not please myself. I will ask—it is a rhetorical question which needs no answer—what is a hapless bachelor to do, who is professionally occupied and tied down in a certain place for just half the year? What is he to do with the other half? I cannot live on in my college rooms, and I am not compelled to do so by poverty. I have near relations and many friends, at whose houses I should be made welcome. But I cannot be like the wandering dove, who found no repose. I have a great love of my independence and my liberty. I love my own fireside, my own chair, my own books, my own way. It is little short of torture to have to conform to the rules of other households, to fall in with other people's arrangements, to throw my pen down when the gong sounds, to make myself agreeable to fortuitous visitors, to be led whither I would not. I do this, a very little, because I do not desire to lose touch with my kind; but then my work is of a sort which brings me into close touch day after day with all sorts of people, till I crave for recollection and repose; the prospect of a round of visits is one that fairly unmans me. No doubt it implies a certain want of vitality, but one does not increase one's vitality by making overdrafts upon it; and then too I am a slave to my pen, and the practice of authorship is inconsistent with paying visits. Of course the obvious remedy is marriage; but one cannot marry from prudence, or from a sense of duty, or even to increase the birth-rate, which I am concerned to see is diminishing. I am, moreover, to be perfectly frank, a transcendentalist on the subject of marriage. I know that a happy marriage is the finest and noblest thing in the world, and I would resign all the conveniences I possess with the utmost readiness

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1907, by Arthur C. Benson, in the United States of America.

for it. But a great passion cannot be the result of reflection, or of desire, or even of hope. One cannot argue oneself into it; one must be carried away. 'You have never let yourself go,' says a wise and gentle aunt, when I bemoan my unhappy fate. To which I reply that I have never done anything else. I have lain down in streamlets, I have leapt into silent pools, I have made believe I was in the presence of a deep emotion, like the dear little girl in one of Reynolds's pictures, who hugs a fat and lolling spaniel over an inch-deep trickle of water, for fear he should be drowned. I do not say that it is not my fault. It is my fault, my own fault, my own great fault, as we say in the Compline confession. The fault has been an over-sensibility. I have desired close and romantic relations so much that I have dissipated my forces; yet when I read such a book as the love-letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett, I realise at once both the supreme nature of the gift, and the hopelessness of attaining it unless it be given; but I try to complain, as the beloved mother of Carlyle said about her health, as little as possible.

Well, then, as I say, what is a reluctant bachelor who loves his liberty to do with himself? I cannot abide the life of towns, though I live in a town half the year. I like friends, and I do not care for acquaintances. There is no conceivable reason why, in the pursuit of pleasure, I should frequent social entertainments that do not amuse me. What have I then done? I have done what I liked best. I have taken a big roomy house in the quietest country I could find, I have furnished it comfortably, and I have hitherto found no difficulty in inducing my friends, one or two at a time, to come and share my life. I shall have something to say about solitude presently, but meanwhile I will describe my hermitage.

The old Isle of Ely lies in the very centre of the Fens. It is a range of low gravel hills, shaped roughly like a human hand. The river runs at the wrist, and Ely stands just above it, at the base of the palm, the fingers stretching out to the west. The fens themselves, vast peaty plains, the bottoms of the old lagoons, made up of the accumulation of centuries of rotting water plants, stretch round it on every side; far away you can see the low heights of Brandon, the Newmarket Downs, the Gogmagogs behind Cambridge, the low wolds of Huntingdon. To the north the interminable plain, through which the rivers welter and the great levels run, stretches up to the Wash. So slight is the fall of the land

towards the sea, that the tide steals past me in the huge Hundred-foot cut, and makes itself felt as far south as Earith Bridge, where the Ouse comes leisurely down with its clear pools and reed-beds. At the extremity of the southernmost of all the fingers of the Isle, a big hamlet clusters round a great ancient church, whose blunt tower is visible for miles above its grove of sycamores. More than twelve centuries ago an old saint, whose name I think was Owen, though it was Latinised by the monks into Ovinus, because he had the care of the sheep, kept the flocks of St. Etheldreda, queen and abbess of Ely, on these wolds. One does not know what were the visions of this rude and ardent saint, as he paced the low heights day by day, looking over the monstrous lakes. At night no doubt he heard the cries of the marsh-fowl and saw the elfin lights stir on the reedy flats. Perhaps some touch of fever kindled his visions; but he raised a tiny shrine here, and here he laid his bones; and long after, when the monks grew rich, they raised a great church here to the memory of the shepherd of the sheep, and beneath it, I doubt not, he sleeps.

What is it I see from my low hills? It is an enchanted land for me, and I lose myself in wondering how it is that no one, poet or artist, has ever wholly found out the charm of these level plains, with their rich black soil, their straight dykes, their great drift-roads, that run as far as the eye can reach into the unvisited fen. In summer it is a feast of the richest green from verge to verge; here a clump of trees stands up, almost of the hue of indigo, surrounding a lonely shepherd's cote; a distant church rises, a dark tower over the hamlet elms; far beyond, I see low wolds, streaked and dappled by copse and wood; far to the south, I see the towers and spires of Cambridge, as of some spiritual city—the smoke rises over it on still days, hanging like a cloud; to the east lie the dark pinewoods of Suffolk, to the north an interminable fen; but not only is it that one sees a vast extent of sky, with great cloud-battalions crowding up from the south, but all the colour of the landscape is crowded into a narrow belt to the eye, which gives it an intensity of emerald hue that I have seen nowhere else in the world. There is a sense of deep peace about it all, the herb of the field just rising in its place over the wide acres; the air is touched with a lazy fragrance, as of hidden flowers; and there is a sense, too, of silent and remote lives, of men that glide quietly to and fro in the great pastures, going quietly about their work in a leisurely calm. In the winter it is fairer still, if one has a taste for austerity.



The trees are leafless now ; and the whole flat is lightly washed with the most delicate and spare tints, the pasture tinted with the yellowing bent, the pale stubble, the rich plough-land, all blending into a subdued colour ; and then, as the day declines and the plain is rimmed with a frosty mist, the smouldering glow of the orange sunset begins to burn clear on the horizon, the grey laminated clouds becoming ridged with gold and purple, till the whole fades, like a shoaling sea, into the purest green, while the cloud-banks grow black and ominous, and far-off lights twinkle like stars in solitary farms.

Of the house itself, exteriorly, perhaps the less said the better ; it was built by an earl, to whom the estate belonged, as a shooting-box. I have often thought that it must have been ordered from the Army and Navy Stores. It is of yellow brick, blue-slated, and there has been a deplorable feeling after giving it a meanly Gothic air ; it is ill-placed, shut in by trees, approached only by a very dilapidated farm-road ; and the worst of it is that a curious and picturesque house was destroyed to build it. It stands in what was once a very pretty and charming little park, with an ancient avenue of pollard trees, lime and elm. You can see the old terraces of the Hall, the mounds of ruins, the fish-ponds, the grass-grown pleasance. It is pleasantly timbered, and I have an orchard of honest fruit-trees of my own. First of all I expect it was a Roman fort ; for the other day my gardener brought me in half of the handle of a fine old Roman water-jar, red pottery smeared with plaster, with two pretty laughing faces pinched lightly out under the volutes. A few days after I felt like Polycrates of Samos, that over-fortunate tyrant, when, walking myself in my garden, I descried and gathered up the rest of the same handle, the fractures fitting exactly. There are traces of Roman occupation hereabouts in mounds and earthworks. Not long ago a man ploughing in the fen struck an old red vase up with the share, and searching the place found a number of the same urns within the space of a few yards, buried in the peat, as fresh as the day they were made. There was nothing else to be found, and the place was under water till fifty years ago ; so that it must have been a boatload of pottery being taken in to market that was swamped there, how many centuries ago ! But there have been stranger things than that found ; half a mile away, where the steep gravel hill slopes down to the fen, a man hoeing brought up a bronze spear-head. He took it up to the lord of the manor, who was

interested in curiosities. The squire hurried to the place and had it all dug out carefully ; quite a number of spear-heads were found, and a beautiful bronze sword, with the holes where the leather straps of the handle passed in and out. I have held this fine blade in my hands, and it is absolutely undinted. It may be Roman, but it is probably earlier. Nothing else was found, except some mouldering fragments of wood that looked like spear-staves ; and this, too, it seems, must have been a boatload of warriors, perhaps some raiding party, swamped on the edge of the lagoon with all their unused weapons, which they were presumably unable to recover, if indeed any survived to make the attempt. Hard by is the place where the great fight related in 'Hereward the Wake' took place. The Normans were encamped southwards at Willingham, where a line of low entrenchments is still known as Belsar's Field, from Belisarius, the Norman Duke in command. It is a quiet place enough now, and the yellow-hammers sing sweetly and sharply in the thick thorn hedges. The Normans made a causeway of faggots and earth across the fen, but came at last to the old channel of the Ouse, which they could not bridge ; and here they attempted to cross in great flat-bottomed boats, but were foiled by Hereward and his men, their boats sunk, and hundreds of stout warriors drowned in the oozy river-bed. There still broods for me a certain horror over the place, where the river in its confined channel now runs quietly, by sedge and willow-herb and golden-rod, between its high flood banks, to join the Cam to the east.

But to return to my house. It was once a monastic grange of Ely, a farmstead with a few rooms, no doubt, where sick monks and ailing novices were sent to get change of air and a taste of country life. There is a bit of an old wall still bordering my garden, and a strip of pale soil runs across the gooseberry beds, pale with dust of mortar and chips of brick, where another old wall stood. There was a great pigeon-house here, pulled down for the shooting-box, and the garden is still full of old carved stones, lintels, and mullions, and capitals of pillars, and a grotesque figure of a bearded man, with a tunic confined round the waist by a cord, which crowns one of my rockeries. But it is all gone now, and the pert cockney-fied house stands up among the shrubberies and walnuts, surveying the ruins of what has been.

But I must not abuse my house, because whatever it is outside, it is absolutely comfortable and convenient within : it is solid, well built, spacious, sensible, reminding one of the 'solid joys and

lasting treasure' that the hymn says 'none but Zion's children know.' And, indeed, it is a Zion to be at ease in.

One other great charm it has : from the end of my orchard the ground falls rapidly in a great pasture. Some six miles away, over the dark expanse of Grunty Fen, the towers of Ely, exquisitely delicate and beautiful, crown the ridge ; on clear sunny days I can see the sun shining on the lead roofs, and the great octagon rises with all its fretted pinnacles. Indeed, so kind is Providence, that the huge brick mass of the Ely water-tower, like an overgrown Temple of Vesta, blends itself pleasantly with the cathedral, projecting from the western front like a great Galilee.

The time to make pious pilgrimage to Ely is when the apple-orchards are in bloom. Then the grim western tower, with its sombre windows, the gabled roofs of the canonical houses, rise in picturesque masses over acres of white blossom. But for me, six miles away, the cathedral is a never-ending sight of beauty. On moist days it draws nearer, as if carved out of a fine blue stone ; on a grey day it looks more like a fantastic crag, with pinnacles of rock. Again it will loom a ghostly white against a thunder-laden sky. Grand and pathetic at once, for it stands for something that we have parted with. What was the outward and stately form of a mighty idea, a rich system, is now little more than an æsthetic symbol. It has lost heart, somehow, and its significance only exists for ecclesiastically or artistically minded persons ; it represents a force no longer in the front of the battle.

One other fine feature of the countryside there is, of which one never grows tired. If one crosses over to Sutton, with its huge church, the tower crowned with a noble octagon, and the village pleasantly perched along a steep ridge of orchards, one can drop down to the west, past a beautiful old farmhouse called Berristead, with an ancient chapel, built into the homestead, among fine elms. The road leads out upon the fen, and here run two great Levels, as straight as a line for many miles, up which the tide pulsates day by day ; between them lies a wide tract of pasture called the Wash, which in summer is a vast grazing-ground for herds, in rainy weather a waste of waters, like a great estuary—north and south it runs, crossed by a few roads or black-timbered bridges, the fen-water pouring down to the sea. It is a great place for birds this. The other day I disturbed a brood of redshanks here, the parent birds flying round and round, piping mournfully, almost within reach of my hand. A little further down, not many months ago, there was

observed a great commotion in the stream, as of some big beast swimming slowly; the level was netted, and they hauled out a great sturgeon, who had somehow lost his way, and was trying to find a spawning-ground. There is an ancient custom that all sturgeon, netted in English waters, belong by right to the sovereign; but no claim was advanced in this case. The line between Ely and March crosses the level, further north, and the huge freight-trains go smoking and clanking over the fen all day. I often walk along the grassy flood-bank for a mile or two, to the tiny decayed village of Mepal, with a little ancient church, where an old courtier lies, an Englishman, but with property near Lisbon, who was a gentleman-in-waiting to James II. in his French exile, retired invalided, and spent the rest of his days 'between Portugal and Byall Fen'—an odd pair of localities to be so conjoined!

And what of the life that it is possible to live in my sequestered grange? I suppose there is not a quieter region in the whole of England. There are but two or three squires and a few clergy in the Isle, but the villages are large and prosperous; the people eminently friendly, shrewd and independent, with homely names for the most part, but with a sprinkling both of Saxon appellations, like Cutlack, which is Guthlac a little changed, and Norman names, like Camps, inherited perhaps from some invalided soldier who made his home there after the great fight. There is but little communication with the outer world; on market-days a few trains dawdle along the valley from Ely to St. Ives and back again. They are fine, sturdy, prosperous village communities, that mind their own business, and take their pleasure in religion and in song, like their forefathers the fenmen, Girvii, who sang their three-part catches with rude harmony.

Part of the charm of the place is, I confess, its loneliness. One may go for weeks together with hardly a caller; there are no social functions, no festivities, no gatherings. One may once in a month have a chat with a neighbour, or take a cup of tea at a kindly parsonage. But people tend to mind their own business, and live their own lives in their own circle; yet there is an air of tranquil neighbourliness all about. The inhabitants of the region respect one's taste in choosing so homely and serene a region for a dwelling-place, and they know that whatever motive one may have had for coming, it was not dictated by a feverish love of society. I have never known a district—and I have lived in many parts of England—where one was so naturally and simply

accepted as a part of the place. One is greeted in all directions with a comfortable cordiality, and a natural sort of good-breeding; and thus the life comes at once to have a precise quality, a character of its own. Everyone is independent, and one is expected to be independent too. There is no suspicion of a stranger; it is merely recognised that he is in search of a definite sort of life, and he is made frankly and unostentatiously at home.

And so the days race away there in the middle of the mighty plain. No plans are ever interrupted, no one questions one's going and coming as one will, no one troubles his head about one's occupations or pursuits. Any help or advice that one needs is courteously and readily given, and no favours asked or expected in return. One little incident gave me considerable amusement. There is a private footpath of my own which leads close to my house; owing to the house having stood for some time unoccupied, people had tended to use it as a short cut. The kindly farmer obviated this by putting up a little notice-board, to indicate that the path was private. A day or two afterwards it was removed and thrown into a ditch. I was perturbed as well as surprised by this, supposing that it showed that the notice had offended some local susceptibility; and being very anxious to begin my tenure on neighbourly terms, I consulted my genial landlord, who laughed, and said that there was no one who would think of doing such a thing; and to reassure me he added that one of his men had seen the culprit at work, and that it was only an old horse, who had rubbed himself against the post till he had thrown it down.

The days pass, then, in a delightful monotony; one reads, writes, sits or paces in the garden, scours the country on still sunny afternoons. There are many grand churches and houses within a reasonable distance, such as the great churches near Wisbech and Lynn—West Walton, Walpole St. Peter, Algarkirk, Terrington St. Clement, and a score of others—great cruciform structures, in every conceivable style, with fine woodwork and noble towers, each standing in the centre of a tiny rustic hamlet, built with no idea of prudent proportion to the needs of the places they serve, but out of pure joy and pride. There are houses like Beaupré, a pile of fantastic brick, haunted by innumerable phantoms, with its stately orchard closes, or the exquisite gables of Snore Hall, of rich Tudor brickwork, with fine panelling within. There is no lack of shrines for pilgrimage—then, too, it is not difficult to persuade some like-minded friend to share one's solitude. And so the

quiet hours tick themselves away in an almost monastic calm, while one's book grows insensibly day by day, as the bulrush rises on the edge of the dyke.

I do not say that it would be a life to live for the whole of a year, and year by year. There is no stir, no eagerness, no brisk interchange of thought about it. But for one who spends six months in a busy and peopled place, full of duties and discussions and conflicting interests, it is like a green pasture and waters of comfort. The danger of it, if prolonged, would be that things would grow languid, listless, fragrant like the Lotos-eaters' Isle; small things would assume undue importance, small decisions would seem unduly momentous; one would tend to regard one's own features as in a mirror and through a magnifying glass. But, on the other hand, it is good, because it restores another kind of proportion; it is like dipping oneself in the seclusion of a monastic cell. Nowadays the image of the world, with all its sheets of detailed news, all its network of communications, sets too deep a mark upon one's spirit. We tend to believe that a man is lost unless he is overwhelmed with occupation, unless, like the conjurer, he is keeping a dozen balls in the air at once. Such a gymnastic teaches a man alertness, agility, effectiveness. But it has got to be proved that one was sent into the world to be effective, and it is not even certain that a man has fulfilled the higher law of his being if he has made a large fortune by business. A sagacious, shrewd, acute man of the world is sometimes a mere nuisance; he has made his prosperous corner at the expense of others, and he has only contrived to accumulate, behind a little fence of his own, what was meant to be the property of all. I have known a good many successful men, and I cannot honestly say that I think that they are generally the better for their success. They have often learnt self-confidence, the shadow of which is a good-natured contempt for ineffective people; the shadow, on the other hand, which falls on the contemplative man is an undue diffidence, an indolent depression, a tendency to think that it does not very much matter what anyone does. But, on the other hand, the contemplative man sometimes does grasp one very important fact—that we are sent into the world, most of us, to learn something about God and ourselves; whereas if we spend our lives in directing and commanding and consulting others, we get so swollen a sense of our own importance, our own adroitness, our own effectiveness, that we forget that we are tolerated rather than needed. It is better on the whole to tarry the Lord's



leisure, than to try impatiently to force the hand of God, and to make amends for his apparent slothfulness. What really makes a nation grow, and improve, and progress, is not social legislation and organisation. That is only the sign of the rising moral temperature; and a man who sets an example of soberness, and kindness, and contentment is better than a pragmatist district visitor with a taste for rating meek persons.

It may be asked, then, do I set myself up as an example in this matter? God forbid! I live thus because I like it, and not from any philosophical or philanthropical standpoint. But if more men were to follow their instincts in the matter, instead of being misled and bewildered by the conventional view that attaches virtue to perspiration, and national vigour to the multiplication of unnecessary business, it would be a good thing for the community. What I claim is that a species of mental and moral equilibrium is best attained by a careful proportion of activity and quietude. What happens in the case of the majority of people is that they are so much occupied in the process of acquisition, that they have no time to sort or dispose their stores; and thus life, which ought to be a thing complete in itself, and ought to be spent, partly in gathering materials, and partly in drawing inferences, is apt to be a hurried accumulation lasting to the edge of the tomb. We are put into the world, I cannot help feeling, to *be* rather than to *do*. We excuse our thirst for action by pretending to ourselves that our own doing may minister to the being of others; but all that it often effects is to inoculate others with the same restless and feverish bacteria.

And anyhow, as I said, it is but an experiment. I can terminate it whenever I have the wish to do so. Even if it is a failure, it will at all events have been an experiment, and others may learn wisdom by my mistake; because it must be borne in mind that a failure in a deliberate experiment in life is often more fruitful than a conventional success. People as a rule are so cautious; and it is of course highly disagreeable to run a risk, and to pay the penalty. Life is too short, one feels, to risk making serious mistakes; but, on the other hand, the cautious man often has the catastrophe, without even having had the pleasure of a run for his money. Jowett, the high priest of worldly wisdom, laid down as a maxim 'never resign'; but I have found myself that there is no pleasure comparable to disentangling oneself from uncongenial surroundings, unless it be the pleasure of making mild experiments and trying unconventional schemes.



*WROTH.*<sup>1</sup>

BY AGNES AND EGERTON CASTLE.

## FOREWORD

HURLEY PRIORY stood in the midst of its denuded lands : a protest, a sermon against the wild race that had laid waste its ancient glories.

Once the home of a rich order, dedicate to the highest service, passion of the great prelate who had found a bridegroom's joy in adorning its already sumptuous beauty, it had been a prize indeed for King Harry. Greedily he had plunged his hands into the accumulated treasure of centuries : the monastery plate chests had contained wonders of art and weight ; the Florentine gold casket that had held Bishop Everard's heart—placed, according to his dying wish, behind the panel of the high altar—had been studded with rubies worth in themselves a king's ransom ; thirty sumpter mules had been laden with vestments and silken stuffs alone. And after the monarch had glutted and gorged himself it had still been a noble gift for his loving servant, Amyas Raby, than whom few had been more zealous in the work of purification.

Amyas Raby had been none of the breed that persecuted and despoiled his neighbour for conscience sake, through greed or yet through base complaisance. In youth the Church had robbed him of his bride and he had vowed vengeance : vengeance to be fearfully wreaked in manhood. After a long pilgrimage of spoliation through the country he settled on the lands of Hurley Abbey—then known as Lady's Grace—to luxuriate in desecration. The walls that had echoed to holy pomp and now seemed to stand with something of a martyr's dignity at the mercy of the tormentor, might well have shuddered, have run blood as the legend had it. The Church that had been his mother, Raby struck upon the cheek ; the very sanctuary of the minster he made the place of his orgies.

The portals were hewn down in order that, through yawning gateways, his horses might enter and tramp over pavements worn

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1907, by Egerton Castle, in the United States of America.

by the knees of generations. Round the altar, transformed into a table, his revels were held. It was from the altar-stone (tradition asserted) that blood had dripped. Matter-of-fact people disposed of the legend by suggesting that so much red wine had been spilt as well as drunk across it that it might well have poured from the table down the steps.

In time, to wild Rabys succeeded the wilder Wroths. If the kinship were somewhat remote, the original spirit of the race seemed curiously reproduced in the new owners: arrogant, fierce-tempered men, with the same animus against the monkish tradition and the same delight in its outrage. The church continued to be used as a great entrance hall to the mansion and its doors to open for the passage of horse and coach. On the sanctuary dais the Wroths still pledged brimmers across what had once been the sacred stone.

Of course, like all such heritages, the place was supposed to hold a mighty curse: the heir to the estate was ever in mortal enmity with the tenant for life: son had never been known to succeed father. The inheritance ran as erratically as wildfire—from nephew to uncle, from cousin to cousin.

The present holder of the honours of Hurley had succeeded his grandfather. This personage had substantiated the family traditions by quarrelling with his only son; and, when the latter had flung him a final defiance by wedding a City heiress, had taken a characteristic revenge. He had laid waste the fair lands he could not alienate. For miles the father's anger had written itself hideously upon hill and plain.

According to custom, the pious founders of the Priory had chosen its site with an eye to beauty as well as material convenience. The woods that sheltered their game, the rivers and ponds that held their fish, the fields that grew their corn, the meadows that fattened their cattle, were all as goodly to the eye as they were prodigal in return. In the space of half a year the whole landscape was mutilated. Every tree was levelled. It was a spite that absorbed an incalculable sum. In his frenzy, Lord Wroth had not paused to make bargains for his timber, and the available labour of the countryside was employed at the work of destruction from dawn to sunset. Vast battalions of trees lay where they were felled; dealers were paid to remove the encumbrance from park and avenue.

And in the end my lord was robbed of the satisfaction of his illegal revenge. He had been in mad haste to strike, but there

was a power swifter still than his wrath. The heir's seeming apathy was one morning explained by a business-like courier from the City. Young Wroth was dead of a pernicious fever and had not even heard of his father's reprisals. The city merchant took the opportunity to hint something of his intention to bring an action in the interest of the minor, his infant grandson, but this intention was never carried through.

Whether from the effects of thwarted rage or of belated remorse, whether prematurely worn out by the violent passions that had rent him all his life, it would be hard to say, but Lord Wroth was that day seized with a stroke—the country folk called it a judgment. For twenty years of ever-deepening imbecility he lived on in the midst of the desolation he had wrought—a body without a soul, dead yet alive, a fairly apt example for the superstitious of the curse of Hurley—once Lady's Grace.

When he passed at last, unmourned and unhonoured, a truthful chronicler might well have described him as the most notorious of a notorious line, had not his young successor bidden fair to outdo him. From the spring of 1813 to the fall of 1816, George, fifth Lord Wroth, had reigned at Hurley; and, short as the time was for the distinction, he was already known from end to end of the country as Mad Wroth.

## CHAPTER I.

'SURELY,' said Juliana, rousing herself from a mood of deep reflectiveness, 'we are being driven strangely fast—wildly!'

Mrs. Panton, the Contessa's woman, spread out in all her good-humoured volume on the back seat of the travelling chaise, shook her head. Ruddy, even in the white light of the moon, her countenance bore that expression of cheerfulness which, as a rule, preluded her most pessimistic utterances:

'Drunk, my lady!' she remarked in an unctuous contralto. 'As soon as I laid eyes on the rascal, at the Wells yonder, says I to myself: "He'll break his neck, and ours too."' She heaved a sigh that more nearly expressed satisfaction than dismay. 'Says I to myself, when your ladyship would leave Annibale in London, and start unprotected on this wildgoose chase: "This will bring disaster on two helpless females . . ."'

'Why, Panton,' said the lady, and her tone was good-naturedly

indifferent, 'did you not yourself tell me that Annibale was more trouble to you than help in this country?'

'I did, my lady, I did. I spent my time, from the hour we set foot at Dover, in getting him out of scrapes and teaching him our English ways. But a man's a man on a lonely road at night, since your ladyship must go on trapezing after that good-for-nothing baggage, who will give your ladyship no gratitude—if indeed we ever live to get to her; which I much doubt, my lady, with that rascal driving us this rate. There will be two corpses at the end of our night's work, not to speak of the post-boy.'

'Well, we must resign ourselves, I suppose,' said her mistress placidly. 'If the fellow is drunk, he will scarce attend to any remonstrance.'

Even as she spoke, the chaise gave a lurch, bounding in and out of a rut. On either side the hedgerows were flying by with nightmare velocity. They turned a corner, and so sharply that Juliana could not repress a cry. The attendant shook her head again.

'What did I say, my lady? Well, thanks be to the Almighty, I finished your ladyship's purple mantle last night; I am quite prepared.'

'But I am not,' said Juliana with a laugh that matched her cry: low-toned and sweet it was, the most controlled expression of feeling conceivable. 'I am by no means prepared, Panton. And I think we must really try to put a stop to this.'

She dropped the window and thrust forth her head. They were going against the wind, and it was a stormy September night. The gust engulfed itself in the folds of her travelling hood; then tore it from her head. The masses of her black hair were seized as by invisible hands, soft yet irresistible, and she was buffeted with her own silken tresses. The leaves whirled past her, torn from writhing branches. The moon, in full glory, sailed high amid seas of white wrack that seemed to part before her as the foam parts in drift and flying scud before the forging ship.

Juliana allowed a few moments to pass before carrying out her purpose. The untamable spirit of the night, the madness of this rushing pace, was calling to something within herself—something hitherto unknown—reckless. She could see the post-boy riding the near horse as a jockey his racer, elbows, knees and heels working; she could hear the snorts of the over-driven creatures and, from inside the coach, her woman ever more jubilantly chant approaching and inevitable dissolution.

Then, suddenly, without any apparent reason, the postilion drew rein, whooped, and cracked his whip. The horses, checked in their headlong stride, plunged and reared. There was an answering shout from the side of the road, the clang and the groan of opening gates. With fresh lashing, curses, tugs, the greys were pulled sideways; for an instant the chaise was balanced on two wheels.

'Try to fall on me, my lady,' intoned Panton.

An ominous grating against the stone post, and the rocking chaise righted itself; the bewildered cattle stretched again into their stride, labouring, it seemed, upon an uphill way. And now behind them the gates groaned and clanged to again. Juliana sank back into her seat.

'We are off the high road,' she said. 'What is the meaning of this?'

Mrs. Panton folded her plump hands.

'It is a *gate-a-pence*. It means that we shall both get our throats cut for the sake of your ladyship's jewels. When I first set eyes on that ruffian: "Murderer," said I to myself.'

'Order him to stop,' said Juliana.

Mrs. Panton protruded her jovial countenance on her side:

'Hi, fellow! Hi, man! Hi, scoundrel!' she called. 'Pull up this moment!'

The post-boy looked over his shoulder, grinning (as she subsequently told her mistress) 'like Satan himself.'

'Hooroo!' cried he, 'there's Tenebry at Hurley-Burley to-night!'

'My lady,' said Panton, as she drew her head in, 'it's worse than drink and thieves. It's stark, staring lunacy . . . and the Lord only knows what he means to do with us!'

'Tenebrae!' repeated Juliana wonderingly.

A vision out of the land which was her home painted itself upon the night. Cypress trees, black about a white church, great doors open, cool gloom within, incense-weighted, restful against the blazing sunshine. In her ears came the echo of a sad chant rising and falling. . . . But 'Tenebrae at Hurley-Burley!' it was like the freak of a dream.

Mistress and maid looked at each other. In one thing were they matched. The thrill in Juliana Mordante's voice held more excitement than fear; and Mrs. Panton, repeating in murmurs to herself that she was quite prepared, had a mantling cheek and a sparkling eye.

'Never fear, my lady,' she cried aloud. 'I could fire one of those pistols in the case, if really brought to it, a deal better than Annibale himself.'

'Perhaps it would not be amiss to get them out,' said Juliana.

Her hands were steady as she drew the polished mahogany box from under the seat. The unsuspected element in her which the voice of the wind had called from slumber to-night was growing stronger, filling her soul. She was twenty-four, and this was the first adventure of her life.

Instead of hedgerows there now ran by them on either side a great waste. It lay ashen in the moonlight; and as the horses strained to the top of the hill and their fallen pace broke into gallop once again, Juliana could see that this barren land spread away, sinking and rising again to the horizon, for miles, it seemed, without a single tree. 'It is some vast moor,' she told herself. And then was surprised to behold a wide shine of water running snake-like and cutting the land in twain—for where river flows, wood should thrive. Presently she discovered that what she had taken for low bushes, darting past, at regular intervals, on each side of the rough grass-grown road, were the stumps of once mighty trees. By and by these ruins of a noble avenue gave place to wholesale slaughtered woods. Here the remains of timber which apparently had not been found worth the removal lay rotting on the ground. It was like a deserted battlefield, where the dead were still stretched as they had fallen. A melancholy seized on her heart: into what story of recklessness and desolation was she being thus strangely rushed?

The carriage crested another hill; and then, at a turn of the road, a mass of building upreared its bulk, black against the pale sky, pierced here and there with a yellow glare, from what seemed extraordinarily high windows.

'Look out this way, my lady, look!' cried Panton. 'This is some great castle.'

'No,' said Juliana in astonishment, 'surely it is a church!'

The light from within revealed indeed the noble yet delicate outlines of lancet windows. Buttresses and pinnacles; a finial and a gargoyle here and there; broken pillars of a ruined cloister; the angle of a high-pitched roof and the fretwork of upspringing spires took shape before her eyes in the mystery of the moonlight.

'Tenebrae at Hurley-Burley . . .!' She had read tales of

mystic experiences where lonely travellers were initiated to ghostly ceremonials, the guests of unquiet spirits engaged in repeating, within ruined walls, the glories, the follies or the crimes of the dead past. But there was reality in the shouts with which their mad post-boy now rent the night ; reality in the roaring breath of the horses, the steaming of their flanks in the chill air ; in Mrs. Panton's solid presence, in her ever rounder eyes of astonishment ; in the jar with which the coach was suddenly pulled up.

For a moment silence enveloped them, complete but for the rushing of the wind and the panting of the horses. Now one of them shuddered and the harness rattled. Then out of the church arose a stave of song followed by a chorus that rang out jovially ribald.

The post-boy raised a fresh howl and again cracked his whip. There was an answering shout from within, a burst of laughter ; and then unreality began again. Slowly, groaning as they went, the great doors, under the carven canopy of the church porch, began to roll back ; a vault of light, orange, lurid, opened between them. The driver urged his horses, lashed them through the once consecrated portal into the church itself. It was almost as if the dumb creatures felt the dread of the sacrilege. Snorting, plunging, their hoofs beating resistance on the stone flags, they were yet forced forward ; the clatter of their passage, the postilion's drunken shouts, echoed and re-echoed from roof and aisle.

With wild laughter, yells and maniac gesture, figures in grey monks' robes rushed to the side of the coach. For a moment to the bewildered occupants all was whirl and noise, flame and darkness. Then they had a vision of the church as the chaise rocked up the nave. Save for here an ancient monument, there a carven figure mutilated in a niche, the place was denuded. Torches, stuck in the long rows of pillars, filled the air with a resinous smoke that hung in wreaths, thickly red below, but silver-tinted by the moonrays where they circled high into the clerestory.

Within a few feet of the altar-steps the travellers' halting and dangerous progress was arrested. One of the horses, blowing deep breaths, as if scenting some new fantastic terror, suddenly refused to advance further ; and when mercilessly pushed, snorted, screamed, reared madly and fell, dragging his companion down with him.

The turmoil that ensued was beyond description. Juliana's ears rang with the sounds of laughter and curses, the clatter of



struggling horses on the stone floor. Before her eyes flitted the grey-robed figures, leaping, mocking, lurching against each other, with the aimless malice, it seemed, of demons at play. Under the cowls curious eyes were peering at her. No dream could have been more senseless, no delirium more evil. Suddenly, above the chaos, a voice rose clear, imperative :

‘Cut the traces!’

The carriage door was wrenched open and Juliana found herself drawn forth in the grasp of compelling hands. For a moment or two she stood, unable to connect her thoughts; then the most immediately irritating factor in the confusion about seemed to her to be Panton’s screams—Panton, who had emerged with extreme briskness in the wake of her mistress, yet deemed it incumbent on her to make the loudest protest in her power.

‘Hush!’ said Juliana sternly. ‘This, after all your boasts, Panton!’

‘My lady,’ said Mrs. Panton, waving the pistols in vague directions; ‘my lady, for death I was prepared, but not for hell.’

The habit of self-control, the hardest, perhaps, to acquire, is of its essence the most faithful at the test. If life had held few joyous emotions for the Contessa Mordante, it had taught her discipline. She looked calmly enough on the scene—the piteous struggle of the foundered animals; her woman’s empurpled countenance; the post-boy, sobered by the catastrophe, and cursing as he busied himself with the traces; the incredible brotherhood of monks. . . . Some eight men these, all apparently more or less young, all evidently more or less drunk.

Apart from the rest, however, on the sanctuary steps, stood one with an air of authority. He was clad like the others, but his cowl was flung back and revealed a young head of classic shape, close-covered with chestnut curls, and a pale, scornful face of singular beauty. Scarcely above middle height, he yet dominated. She knew instinctively that his were the hands that had drawn her from the coach, his the voice that had rung out sanely through the general madness. To him she turned :

‘Perhaps you, sir, can explain this outrage?’

She dropped her hood as she spoke. At sight of her countenance the young man fell back a step, as if blasted with astonishment, and then stood staring at her with a kind of intensity, gloomy and yet afire. His eyes held hers and stillness seemed to set about them as their gaze commingled.

Then at Juliana's elbow came a cry of disgusted amazement. A pink, insolent, boyish face was thrust close :

'Whom have we here ?—By jingo, it is the wrong woman !'

'The wrong woman !' echoed another voice. 'Trapped the wrong bird, eh ? Gad, look at Martindale's face—the richest joke !'

'Tom, Dick, Harry, whatever your rascally name is, you'll smart for this !' cried the first, turning to the post-boy and exploding with fury.

'The wrong bird, by George !' repeated the second, in a fresh gust of merriment. 'Madam, you must excuse me, but as I'm a sinner, here's a noble prank of fate !' Within the loose habit his slim figure was doubled up with spasms of mirth.

Juliana's glance strayed from one grinning face to another. The mock friars were gathering oppressively about her ; she caught broken phrases that fell ominously.—'Never complain, Martindale, the bird will do well enough.'—'Gad, lay a trap for a hedge-sparrow and take a bit of plumage like this . . . a swan, a swan, a bird of paradise !'—'What's Martindale got to do with her now, eh, Scaife ? This is a prize dropped from heaven and let the best win !'

The postilion, his fingers trembling over the buckles they strove to disentangle, raised his whine :

'I did as I was bid. I picked the lady up where you ordered me. Did you not warn me never to mind if she screamed ? And——'

'Never mind, you'll have double pay for it, lad,' answered the laughing monk.

Here Panton's screams cut the air anew. She struck, with the muzzle of her pistol, at an arm that was reaching for her mistress's waist.

Juliana flashed a look towards the young man who had helped her and who had seemed to hold some kind of authority. This look commanded rather than appealed. He started from his rapt contemplation, and came down the steps of the sanctuary.

'Back, you fools !' he ordered.

His tone was so acrid, the scowl which accompanied the words was so blighting, that the crew seemed to melt away before him ; then, turning to Juliana, he made a bow of the most complete courtesy and held out his hand.

'Madam,' he said, 'I am Lord Wroth, and master here. May I have the honour of conducting you to a seat ? These wretches have alarmed you.'

Once more the two remained motionless, measuring each other. After a few seconds, moved by an unaccountable impulse of confidence, Juliana laid her hand in his and, without a word, suffered him to lead her where he would. He brought her up the steps, to the sanctuary dais, to the head of the altar-table, where stood a high-backed chair pushed on one side as if its last occupant had hastily risen. Here she let herself sink down, for her knees were giving way.

‘A glass of wine,’ said he, his eyes still fixed in singular intensity upon her. It was a glance fiercely eager, yet so reverential, so deeply earnest, that it could hold no offence. He stretched for a decanter that shone purple beneath the light of the many silver candelabra decking the table, and, as he did so, his voluminous sleeve caught in a goblet, which fell with a clang of breaking glass, while a thin stream of red ran swiftly across the stone. With a smothered oath he flung the encumbering robe from him and stood in full evening dress, exquisite in all detail of ruffle, high stock, miraculous waistcoat and engraved button, giving a first impression of dandyism, instantly corrected by the virile lines of the face, by its extraordinary combination of gloom, passion, and inspiration.

‘You are pale, madam,’ he said, bending over her; and this time there was a softness, almost a huskiness in his voice, of which Juliana vaguely felt the attractiveness. The thought flashed into her mind that such a voice, in accents of love, would be irresistible; then, amazed at herself, feeling indeed as if she must be in some fevered dream in which she could not control her mind, she stretched out her hand for the wine which was respectfully yet urgently proffered. As she sipped she heard the clarion tones raised again:

‘Fools, did I not say—cut the traces? You’ll never get them unbuckled now! Vane, ring the bell; we must have help from the yard. Scaife, give the woman a chair. You, Martindale and Devisme, what dolts you fellows be! You tried to play your joke on me—and a d—d bad one, too! And it’s fizzled out, and you’re shown a set of pretty asses. There’s nothing to laugh at!—Madam,’ he went on, turning back to Juliana, ‘my stables are at your disposal. You can proceed on your journey when you have rested and refreshed yourself. For the moment, believe me, I am honoured to find myself your host.’

His orders were followed, as they rang out, by a marked com-

motion among the mock friars. One started running towards the end of the church. Two youths who had been plaguing Mrs. Panton, harmlessly enough, by alternately simulating terror at her pistols, and endeavouring to encircle her substantial waist in fond embrace, proceeded with burlesque graces to conduct her up the steps and establish her at the further end of the table.

'My lord,' cried the postilion, raising a scarlet countenance from the harness with which he was still struggling, 'you will have to pay for this night's work!'

A couple of the more sober of the fraternity hustled him on one side, and the straps fell apart. There followed an echoing scramble as, relieved from the weight of the chaise, the ill-treated horses were able at last to rise. The shout of triumph which attended this success was drowned by the note of a deep-toned bell booming above into the night, falling and withdrawing and breaking forth again, like waves upon the strand.

Juliana laid down the glass; the glow of the wine, as it ran through her frame, roused again the spirit which had so unexpectedly answered to the wild night's adventure. But at the clang of the bell a different mood came upon her; it was like a warning, a message from the past, a cry from this house, whilom of God, against those who were desecrating its memories. She turned a grave look upon him who had called himself her host, and the thought struck her that, if the great Angel of Evil were to take shape on earth, he might well wear even such a countenance of sinister beauty and despair, of scorn and power.

The last breaker of sound struck and ebbed away. It was echoed by a long dismal howl, unlike anything that she had ever heard before; and, though she argued with herself that it could be but the wail of some chained hound, she felt her hair arise with a sense of inexplicable terror.

From the left aisle—from what had once been a side chapel with an exit upon the cloisters—came the rumbling of heavy doors upon their hinges and the clattering of a *posse* of stablemen, obedient to the summons of the bell. Lord Wroth left Juliana's side and went to the head of the steps. One of the men came forward and his master spoke to him in a low voice. The fellow touched his forelock and withdrew. In an incredibly short space of time horses and chaise had vanished.

As the doors closed with reverberating clangour, the mummers streamed up into the sanctuary once more and clustered together

at the end of the table. With the disappearance of the tangible evidence of her arrival in these fantastic surroundings, Juliana could hardly persuade herself once again that she was not in a dream. Yet must she know herself in a reality of peril. New libations were beginning. A few more bottles among the crew, and how would it stand with her? Panton, half-hysterical with rage and fear, could prove of no protection; and, as for her host, that gaze of his, ever upon her, began to enter her soul as something infinitely troubling.

Though she sat in outward calm, like a queen upon her throne, the inward tension grew well-nigh unbearable. In the end she almost welcomed the danger she had foreseen. It came suddenly. It passed swiftly, all in accord with the strangeness of the whole adventure.

Through what had been the sacristy in days of old two servants in livery, bearing flagons, entered the sanctuary, followed by a white-headed butler, carrying a large cup carefully in both hands. The old man advanced slowly, and, casting an anxious, almost agonised, glance upon her, bowed to his master. Then she saw that what the trembling hands clasped was a human skull, heavily mounted in silver.

'My lord——' he quavered, his eyes—honest eyes they were—still fixed on herself. Wroth turned sharply, and his face darkened with a frown that once more reminded Juliana of her fanciful simile.

'What is this?'

'My lord—you, or at least Mr. Martindale, gave orders that—when the bell should ring——'

A great shout interrupted him, echoed and re-echoed:

'Aye, bravo! Yes, yes, the toast, the toast of Hurley!'

All sprang to their feet. One of the footmen, as if going through a well-known ceremonial, began to pour the contents of a flagon into the sinister cup. At the first lap of the wine into the bowl Mrs. Panton's 'hell' broke loose. Juliana had a troubled impression of struggling figures, arms extended, oaths, laughter, outcries.

'The first to drink the toast to have the first chance! The old Hurley-Burley rules—first draught, first chance!' cried the tallest monk fiercely, elbowing right and left as he forced his way to the front. The butler, hustled, let the wine fall in splashes over the cup. Lord Wroth became livid.

'Back!' he cried in a voice that once again struck instant silence. Then, into the hush, a figure came running among them, and sprang upon the table itself. It was the post-boy, sobered as to the fumes of drink, but now drunk with anger.

'I'll tell you what, my lord and gentlemen. It's a very fine joke for you, but it's scurvy treatment of a poor lad! You rich folk play your pranks with the poor, make a lad tipsy, toss him a guinea to drive crooked instead of straight, and it's none of you care if it's death and ruin to him. I've been used shameful; and the grey's knees are broke, my lord——'

In the hush the hollow sound of his own voice became unexpectedly alarming to him. His high fury fell suddenly; he proceeded in a whine:

'The grey's knees are broke. Blue Bess's knees are broke cruel on your wicked church slabs! She'll never be fit for the road again; she might as well be shot. And I'm done for! It was the rum; my head can't stand it. When I bargained to drive the lady to your tenebry I——'

An outbreak of jeers and laughter swallowed up his plaint. A groan escaped from the old butler. Pandemonium broke out again, furiously. One seized the cup; it was snatched by another. Floating words of mysteriously ugly significance fell upon Juliana's ear. 'The toast!' 'Martindale's noble joke!' And then, from lip to lip, the cry: 'The Queen of the revels—the unknown beauty; and a beauty she is!'

Mrs. Panton shrieked lamentably and, seized with inspiration, fired off one of her pistols in the air. This brought a new pause while vault and arch took up the report and threw it, ever fainter, from side to side; then again came the roar of tipsy laughter, and again Juliana's whole frame shivered at the sound of an eerie howl uplifted, with its inexplicable note of savage melancholy, from the far depths of the church.

Protected on the one side by the table, on the other by Lord Wroth, she forced herself to continued immobility, lest a single gesture betray her to insult. But the narrow line that divides the two stages of inebriation—where excitement passes to insanity—had been overstepped, and the ascendancy which up to now had sufficed to act as restraint proved powerless. The revellers, as they pressed round the table, had ceased to be merely inanely frolicsome; they were becoming dangerous. Two, more openly audacious, were easily thrust aside. A third caught the back of

her chair and swung it from the table. It was he who had raised the cry : ' First draught, first chance ! '

' For the Lord's sake, Mr. Devisme, sir ! ' wailed the old servant.

But Devisme brandished the death's-head cup, which he had at last secured, one arm across the top of Juliana's chair.

' First toast—I have it—she is mine ! ' he bellowed, and brought the draught to his lips.

Instantly the host's voice resounded :

' Devisme, I charge you ! '

' Wroth,' retorted the other, laughing wildly, ' a rule's a rule. By all the rules of this ancient brotherhood the toast is mine ! '

He spoke with a dreadful clearness—one of those whom wine maddens rather than besots. ' In nomine Patris,' he intoned. The rest of the blasphemy was lost in uproar.

Juliana felt the menace of his huge strength encompass her. He had drawn ever closer—had well-nigh seated himself on the arm of her chair. And suddenly she became aware that her sole protector had left her side. Terror came upon her. In her state of loathing watchfulness every movement of the man who had so insolently claimed her became acute to her senses ; she could hear the greedy lapping in his throat as the wine ran down. When that huge cup was emptied he would turn to her. . . . But now the voice that she had already learned to distinguish among all the others reached her ear, as it were from some hollow distance.

' Wild beasts are you. . . . Then wild beasts shall teach you manners ! '

Even upon the word there came a snarl—sharp as the cut of a whip—and, for the third time, the savage cry : this was followed by a clank as of chains falling upon the pavement, and the voice of Wroth again :

' Up, Lupus, up ! '

Amid the near confusion someone called out :

' Damnation, it's the wolf ! '

Others, aghast, echoed the words :

' The wolf ! '

There was a protesting outcry, then a hush ; and, in the hush, from out the distant darkness, another sound that filled the whole church with threat—a low muttered growl, as deep as it was sly.

Devisme, leaning across her, flung the emptied skull on the table and in suddenly altered accents exclaimed :

' The madman never means to loose the beasts upon us ! '



The post-boy, who had been consoling himself with a bottle, gulped with terror, jumped down the steps, and set off running; and, as he ran, he cried: 'The wolf, the bear! The Hurley beasts! The nags smelt them; the nags knew!'

A sort of hunting call, fierce, jubilant, drawing ever nearer, pierced the tumult:

'At them, Lupus, at them! On, Professor Brown! Hoy, my fine fellows, at them! At them, my good boys! Hoy, hoy, hoy!'

The friars parted, fell away. Juliana saw their faces, some in the shadow of their hoods, some uncovered, all blasted with the same fear—a fear the more ugly that it was stamped on the vacuity of drunkenness. But she saw, scarcely marking. The one vision of which she was acutely conscious was that of Wroth's figure, leaping up the church in fantastic bounds and jerks, holding a chain in either hand; he was alternately pulled forward by the rush of a wolf and dragged back by the halting, lolling gait of a Pyrenean bear, upreared, monstrous tall. She saw the opal glare of the wolf's eyes, the open, straining jaws, the bristling ruff; the small red eyes of the bear, its enormous head with its expression of sly humour—the creature that hugs its prey to death. She had at the same time a flashing impression of Pantón's face, paralysed with terror, devoid of all expression, like a doll's. And in but another instant, it seemed to her, the extraordinary group was upon them.

The brotherhood scattered. The footmen dropped tray and bottles and ran as hastily as the post-boy. There was hardly a sound under the vaulted roof beyond Wroth's own diabolic hunting cries, the breath of the wolf, the grunts of the bear. The butler alone stood his ground; again he uttered rebuke:

'My lord, my lord! . . . Master George, think of the ladies!'

'Yes, Lupus, it may be fresh meat to-night for you! A spring at the throat, my game boy—ah, and your nice white teeth crunching through it! Hoy, Professor, you're slow, Monsieur, but you are sure, as I know. You'll teach them how to embrace, won't you? How close, how sure, how lovingly! 'Tis lovers they would be—eh? You'll show them how, Monsieur Lebrun, Emeritus Professor, at the Academy of Hugs! Hoy, Lupus! hoy, Professor! What, gone? What, gentlemen—on the scuttle? What, not one of you ready for a fall with brother bear, or a snap with brother wolf? Wild beasts did I call you? Not even wild beasts: rats, swine!

Friars of Hurley-Burley—you? Never! Pot-house bucks . . . no comrades for my revels—'

The words flowed from the young man's lips with extraordinary passion. When he reached the altar steps he suddenly released the bear and made a gesture as if to cast the wolf's chain from him, and the silent spring of the creature, its open and slaving jaws so close to her, brought for the first time a sensation of faintness upon Juliana. There was a rush of feet upon the flags; a medley of oaths, some inanity of laughter, cries, muffled or angry. The heavy doors of the church were slammed in quick succession, and the dull noise again woke all the distant echoes of roof and vault.

'Routed?' chanted Wroth, still in the same high key of exultation. 'Fled—not a rat, not a grunter left!'

He stood a moment motionless, only his gaze wandered. Then he flung back his head and laughed, loud and long; and fantastically the stones gave back his laughter.

The bear lolloped up to the table, making odd little sounds of pleasure to himself; and Mrs. Panton started from her palsy to find a hairy muzzle gently but firmly pushing against her arm. Bruin's intentions were harmless enough; he was but aiming at the sweet cake which one of her officious attendants had placed within her reach. But Mrs. Panton found this added terror more than her boasted stoic preparedness could endure. Shrieking, she scuttled out of the chair with an agility surprising for her size, and cast herself upon the old servant's breast.

The latter had taken his master's post beside Juliana's chair, and stood, it seemed, on guard there—a strange figure of venerable respectability in that picture of riot. He patted Mrs. Panton soothingly on the arm.

'Don't be alarmed, ma'am, nor you either, my lady. The poor bear will hurt nobody; he's as harmless as a child—if people only knew it.'

'Take the woman away, Bertram.'

Wroth, fallen into stillness, stood gazing at Juliana, one foot on the crouching body of the wolf, as it lay extended, panting on the marble mosaic. Juliana thought of some bronze figure she remembered in the market-place of an old Italian town—a St. Michael with the demon at his feet, no fallen angel this time! One of the most singular things of this singular evening, it seemed to her afterwards, was her own power of detachment from the

physical terrors about her. Never had her mind worked more vividly.

'My good woman,' said Lord Wroth, addressing Mrs. Panton very kindly, 'the butler will take you where you can rest and recover yourself, before resuming the journey.—See, Bertram, that she has supper and a glass of wine in quiet.'

There was a touch of humour in the last words. Mrs. Panton sketched a curtsey. The born servant is quick to recognise the born master. He might be a mad gentleman, but he was a true lord, as she never failed, afterwards, to remark when she reached this point in the recounting of her thrilling experience.

'Or a tumbler of punch,' added my lord, with a swift glance; her visage still wore the mottled pallor of the naturally rubicund. She curtseyed again. The prescription was acceptable; Mr. Bertram was the living image of all proper decorum; and she was burning with curiosity. If anyone could make a man talk, while holding her own tongue, it was she. And with just a sip! . . . But Panton was sturdy in her allegiance.

'My mistress——' she hesitated, 'my lady——?'

Her lady sat so strangely still. Poor lamb, should Panton abandon her, for safety and punch? And to wolves indeed! She looked at Wroth's face—it was dark with a sudden frown; at the wolf, beneath his foot. She shuddered . . . and behind her, the bear was munching and grumbling.

'For myself,' she cried valiantly, 'I do not care—I cannot leave my mistress.'

Here Bertram intervened.

'My lord, indeed, there have been evil doings to-night! A lady—a true lady, my lord! For God's sake, my lady, how did you come here? My lady, this is no place for such as you.'

'Bertram!' The word broke from Wroth with uncontrollable passion. But Bertram was unafraid; his old blue eyes were only sad as he looked back at the fierce convulsed face. He shook his grey head.

'My lady,' he urged, 'indeed this is no place for you. His lordship——' He paused. 'His lordship will make amends, he will provide you with carriage and horses.—The house of Wroth has had shame enough, my lord, but never such as this.'

'Bertram,' repeated his master—the fury had passed from his countenance suddenly and his tone was friendly—'you are an old fool; the carriage is already ordered and the lady will be leaving

within the hour. Meanwhile, entertain you the servant. I entertain my guest. You permit it, madam ?'

He turned to Juliana and the last phrase was spoken in accents which both compelled and pleaded. The fire of his eye was upon her. Juliana inclined her head. At this he bowed and, turning, flung a gesture of command. It was a wordless reception of her inexplicable acquiescence, yet Juliana saw in it a triumph higher than if it had been shouted. Their eyes met and she was blind to her woman's further demur, blind to the butler's covert signs—shaking disclaimers of further responsibility, wordless prognostication of mischief.

The retreating steps, dropping on the flags like water in some rocky cavern, drew to ever greater distance ; and, at last, the closing of the sacristy door set its hollow stamp upon the silence, a seal, as it were, upon their solitude—something solemn, final, irrevocable.

## CHAPTER II.

AFTER a pause Wroth spoke ; impetuously the words fell from him. There were cadences in his voice which pierced to Juliana's senses like sudden music.

'That old man . . . he held me in his arms when I was born. He loves me, like a father at once and a slave. But you, you know me better than he does. What, the very beasts would respect you, and I should not ! Lupus'—he cried, caught the creature by the collar and dragged him to where she sat—'Lupus, down before the lady !'

The savage thing snarled and writhed in his grip ; but at Juliana's feet, whether cowed by his voice and hand, whether moved by some fear of her impassive presence, it drooped its fierce head and fawned and slavered.

'Una !' he called exultantly, 'Una ! did I not know ?'

She slowly raised her eyes from where they rested upon the panting wolf.

'Ah, yes,' he exclaimed as if in answer to something she had said, 'the hour is short for us two together. Shall it not give us what it can ?—Back to the kennel, Lupus !'

With a turn of the wrist he wrenched his strange favourite away. In all things he moved with the impulsiveness of a boy : she thought he must be very young, though his face told the tale of so much life. 'And you, Monsieur—come, Professor, to your hutch !'

He hustled the creatures as a schoolboy might his comrades ; roughly, good-humouredly, with as little fear.

Wonder had left her. She watched him down the altar dais and across the nave, cuffing and pushing the bear, the wolf straining as before. She saw the odd trio pass again in fantastic springs through the torch-lit spaces, to be engulfed at length by the blackness of the aisle ; heard again a clank of chains ; then running steps, light as Mercury's. He was by her side once more.

'Now,' he said, 'now !'

When he lifted his voice, in command or in anger, it was sonorous and clear as a bell ; when he spoke to her it was lowered, it had a sort of tender huskiness which each time made her heart beat quickly. He took one of the heavy chairs—carved with fruit and flower and beast they were, with holy symbols on the back of them ; therein had successions of earnest monks rested and prayed so many years ago—drew it close to her and sat down.

'Will you give me your hand ?' he said, low as a whisper.

'No,' said Juliana, in grave and gentle tone.

This was almost the first word she had spoken, and it was, No. Like lightning came the question :

'You are not free ?'

And again she answered :

'No.'

If she had struck him with a dagger, a swifter pallor could hardly have spread upon his face.

'I knew it was impossible,' he cried. 'Before God, I knew it ! Yet it might have been !'

He pushed back his chair, grating against the marble, put an elbow on the table, propped his head upon his hand and seemed to steep himself in contemplation. The thick chestnut curls clustered over his fingers : she noticed that the line of his forehead was noble and broad ; that the eyebrows, running close together and low, nearly met, to rise with an outer sweep at each temple ; that the eyes, set wide apart, full of fire, alternately restless and brooding, were rufous in colour like the hair, with pupils that dilated and contracted quickly according to the mood. Now these eyes looked dark and soft, now light and cruel. For the rest of the countenance, it recalled that of some marble god such as Italy has treasured from those past days when beauty was held divine. 'It is the Hermes of the Vatican,' she said to herself, suddenly scornful of a world grown ugly.

Afterwards she marvelled to think of the many similes she had sought in order to express this man to herself : similes from the earth-world and the spirit-world, from stone and bronze—while yet it was the most individual personality she had ever met, the most alive.

From gloomy that it was, his gaze gradually became illuminated ; in it delight succeeded fierceness ; it began to caress her, to feast upon her ; seemed to be clothing her in radiance, in colour, in beauty, as the artist clothes his ideal.

Juliana's head was a little uplifted. She sat with each arm flung loosely upon the supports of the Abbot's chair. It was a characteristic attitude, restful yet restrained ; her whole presence was both peaceful and strong. The folds of a black travelling dress clung to the long lines of her figure and threw into strong relief the magnolia pallor of face and bare throat. The dark amethyst hue of her travelling cloak gave a rich touch of colour to this warm, white beauty. Her hair, loosened, hung on each side of her forehead like brooding wings, dark as night. It was no English type. Some fiercer sun had nurtured this woman, given richness to the ivory skin, given the ripeness to her young loveliness, drawn the full yet pure outline of face and figure, shadowed those eyes. When Shakespeare wrote of 'Violets dim, sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,' he had the hue of the faint wood-violet of English copses in his mind as much as its fragrance. Yet, surely, it must have been after an Italian journey that he drew the simile : few countrywomen of his own could have looked upon him through those delicate shadows that are as far removed from ill-health as they are close to beauty. Juliana's eyes seemed softly dark in their dark setting. And it was with surprise that he, who continued to gaze at her as if to impregnate himself with the joy of her, presently perceived that they were of a deep pansy purple.

In the pause which had fallen about them he saw the wings of her nostrils begin to quiver with quickened breath. Her lips parted. They were full lips and passionate, yet innocent—child's lips. But the eyes were those of a grave and wise woman. Uncontrollable words broke from him :

'Even in my dreams,' he cried, 'you were never so beautiful ! Oh, this glorious hour ! After all, the hour is the life. I am unspeakably happy. This is delight unspeakable !' His point of view changed quickly. Her attraction was not merely physical, far from it. 'There is not another woman in the world who would

have known that she could trust me. You knew. You, the one woman who could have made me the man I could be.' Sorrow struggled with the ecstasy on his face. 'The one woman,' he repeated. 'Out of the night you have come to me. Out into the night you will go from me. And that will be the end.'

She leaned forward—it seemed the first time she had moved, almost, since she had first sat in that chair—and placed her clasped hands upon the table. The fingers were long and taper, they were beautiful hands. The wedding ring gleamed : as he marked it he sighed. Then pleasure mounted again :

'I have always thought a dark beauty was at her best in black.'

It was an exclamation that in so young a man would have betrayed many things to one versed in the world's ways. Juliana was not so versed ; yet, for the first time, his out-speaking brought offence. Something of the curious spell was broken. What was she doing here ? She compressed the lips that had been so softly opened. Her brows drew together into what was hardly a frown, a mere reflection of trouble. By some abnormal intuition, it seemed, her very thought was bare to him. The next instant, he knew, she would draw her cloak about her and rise, and his hour would drop away from him, incomplete.

'No !' he cried imploringly. 'No, before heaven, nothing that is base in me can live in your presence. I am what you would have me. Listen,' he cried, and leaned forward. By her change of attitude she had brought herself closer. As he spoke now, his breath fanned a loosened tendril of her hair. She could see, for his gaze compelled hers, the alternate dilation and contraction of the pupils of his red-brown eyes. By shifting his hand he could have touched her ; by a single movement he could have clasped her to him. But the momentary doubt had left her. As he had said : she knew.—It was only their spirits that would meet.

'All my life, all my life, I have felt that you were somewhere—I have longed for you.' Thus he plunged into his strange confession. 'And at the moment when, from want of you, I have touched my lowest depth, you have come to me ! As you heard, there was *Tenebrae* at the Abbey to-night. Do you know what that means ? Do angels know what takes place in hell ? This is our latter-day *Medmenham*. We must carouse, and have comrades in our carouses. But the tavern is too common a meeting-place for such choice souls as we. We must sing our ribald songs within walls held sacred still in the memory of the countryside. We must



blaspheme in the sanctuary of prayers. We must make a mock of brotherhood, of piety and sacred rules, in mimicry of holy friars of old. The more outrageous, the better the jest. Oh, we are gay dogs and witty, I and my boon companions—and I am the leader of them all! Such noble use do I make of life.' Indescribable was the bitterness with which he spoke. 'To-night this humorous brotherhood of ours conspired, it seems, to play a trick upon me, their worthy abbot. They have my leave to drink and gamble and fight to their hearts' content. But I have lately set a new rule, madam, as monastic as any that old Ambrose ever enjoined: I said I would have no more women to my feasts. It used to be, as at Medmenham, that the revels at Hurley were not complete without a Queen of Folly—the fight for her, with cards or the foils or drinking feats, was the whet to enjoyment. Every friar, by the rule of the order, had the right to convene the queen of the hour. . . . Faugh! I declared I would have no more of this. You perceive, therefore, the point of the jest to-night? How you, madam, came to be concerned in it, instead of the creature, whoever she be, who was expected, is still obscure. . . . Drunk, indeed, and besotted must have been the wretch who could mistake you for her. But I cannot kill him, because, through him, I have seen you.'

There fell a pause. Juliana's face remained impassive, save in its ever deepening look of sorrow. He took up his tale again, with lowered voice but quickened accents.

'They were hankering, apparently, for the old rites I had sickened of. We used to set the Queen of Folly in the Abbot's chair—where you now sit. She was toasted in the skull; and, according to our ritual, he who first emptied the cup had first chance for favour. Do you know,' he went on after a silence, 'that this is the skull of the great Abbot who loved the monastery and enriched it? The money he brought still jingles—a few pieces of it—in my coffers. He was buried under the high altar here, but his bones were dug up in old Harry's time and scattered—for my ancestor hated monks—but the skull was kept to make merry withal. . . . Do you know,' he struck the stone slab, 'that this was part of the high altar in the days when this hall was consecrate? People like to say that the first night the new master of the Abbey gathered his friends together and made banquet over it the altar-stone ran blood. We Wroths have made Tenebrae at Hurley ever since. Hurley, my Raby ancestor called it; it used

to be Lady's Grace. . . Hurley-Burley, the countryside has it, since my rule here began !'

Juliana sighed, her eyes wandered from his face down the aisle. Many of the torches had burnt themselves away, some flickered fitfully, but a few still flared. It was a strange picture of glow and gloom, with here gaping arches of blackness, there an empty niche painted by the flame; through the wreaths of vapour that hung heavy and brooding, a bat hovered in noiseless flight—now lost, now scarlet-winged, a fiery semi-circle. It was like some evil thought, ever recurring. Half-way in the long columned space under the leaps of a torch that seemed to sob its life out, the placid recumbent figure on the tomb of the first Abbot kept springing into sight and fading—the praying hands, the upturned feet, calm image of rest and resignation in this desecrated place. The shadows and the lurid gleams shifted and intermingled. The air seemed full of sighs; and Juliana sighed again, as her look came back to the eager countenance of her host.

'So this was the sacred altar stone,' she said, with one of her rare gestures, laying both hands flat upon it. 'And this once a sacred place !'

Whenever she spoke, his ear was so delighted by the sound of her voice that he lingered upon its sweetness before considering the meaning of her words. It was grave and low; soft, as if for his ear alone; and yet it appeared to him to fill the church. He feasted on it and then flushed. Twice she had spoken in denial, once in rebuke. Passion trembled for a moment on his lip; then he saw how her purple eyes had widened sorrowfully, and how a cloud had gathered in them. Rarest of women—her frown was a shadow, her tears a mist !

'There shall never be *Tenebrae* in Hurley-Burley again,' he cried suddenly. 'It shall never be Hurley-Burley again. Since you have come to it, it is Lady's Grace once more. . . . Oh, how you look at me with your wonderful eyes ! Your silence is the most beautiful thing in all the world : it is like the night sky, it holds the whole earth in peace. But when you speak the words are like stars upon the sky. Oh, if it had been mine to have the promise of your silence, the fulfilment of your voice !'

He sprang to his feet and threw his arms aloft, paced the sanctuary twice or three times as in a sort of frenzy; then, returning, he fell upon his knees beside her chair, clasping the carved arm of it with both hands. So might the penitent fling himself at the feet

of him who he believes can ease him of his burden. Even in such burning words might he lay bare the secrets of his soul with the acrid joy of self-revelation, pouring them out into the ear that helps merely by listening.

‘From my very cradle,’ he said, ‘when I asked for bread I was given a stone. My mother disliked me as a child ; as a man she hated and despised me. I was a sullen, fierce-tempered brat. You would not wonder if you knew my inheritance. My father spent most of his short life in devising plans to spite his father. The union of which I am the only fruit was the culmination of this filial policy. My grandfather died a living death of rage in this house, after laying waste the lands in revenge upon his son. Had you passed through it by daylight, you would have seen my goodly heritage: five thousand acres mutilated or left fallow—blighted by an old man’s venom! My mother beat me before I could speak. What temper was I likely to have brought with me into the world? What patience, what self-control, was I likely to learn? I could have been taught with love. Oh, with love, I could have learned! But no one ever gave me that. Wasted childhood, wasted boyhood—worse than my murdered lands! At school, arrogant and morose, curbed by my masters, dreaded by my fellows, I hid my yearning for affection, for sympathy, for friendship, under the triple armour of pride, passion and reserve. And always the beating of wings in my soul; the longing for some ecstasy, some perfection, ever dimly descried, ever denied! Always feeling here, and here,’ he struck his breast and brow with open palm, ‘the power, the insight, and flung back, flung ever upon the lowest! I was made for soaring, I was condemned to crawl. My masters I despised; none of their petty motives, their misused opportunities, their base aims were lost to me; and, beyond all their stores of book-knowledge, I, ignorant, had intuitions which carried me into regions they could not even guess at. Plenty there were who crawled before me because I was Wroth, a patrician, and certain some day to have wealth and power at my command. Never but once in those forlorn days did I meet a creature who had a fibre of real sympathy for me; an honest heart that loved me for what could be loved in me. And he, my school-fellow, was drowned.’

His voice faltered. Juliana saw his face set into pallid darkness; his eyes were fixed as if looking upon the tragedy and ugliness of his life.

'Then came my manhood. . . . What of my manhood? What can I tell you of it? I talk of my wasted childhood, my wasted boyhood—what of those other years? Murdered, too, murdered! False friends, false loves, vain search, recurring disillusion, betrayal, perpetual disgust! Then wine to dull the cry of the heart—sport, sport to exalt the body, to tire it out. Look at me! I can swim miles, I can break a crown-piece between my fingers, I can thrash a coalheaver, I can put a ball through the heart of an ace at twenty paces—I can ride any horse that ever was foaled, and can tire out Angelo with the foils. I can win any woman in half an hour—now you are offended! No, do not turn your chaste eyes away. What have women been to me? Less than the bubble of champagne, the moment's exhilaration. At the second sip already flat, stale. And always the same wine from a different glass! . . . I drank, I wearied, I loathed. And all the while that inner self crying out, wailing! All the while the exquisite vision, unattainable. All the while the impulse for the mountain heights, the pure air, the high solitude . . . and I on the dunghill, with the cattle about me—until to-night! To-night, now, I am soaring at last—with you! We spread our pinions. Do you not feel it, you too? Whatever your life has been you have kept heaven in your eyes. But you, too, on your solitary peak, must have wanted me. Our spirits are mates from the beginning. Oh, silent woman, beautiful—you with the dark hair and the deep wise eyes, we were born for each other. We were made for each other. Now our souls kiss!'

The veiled tenderness of his voice, through rise and fall and inflection, found wild echoes in Juliana's being. Had she been on the heights, lonely? Rather she had been caged: bars about her everywhere. And now for an hour she was free; for the first time she felt she too had wings and felt the wind beneath them; she could circle and rise and soar. And, above her, calling her, was the being that nature had meant for her mate. An hour half run out . . . and after that, into the cage again!

He had started to his feet and was bending over her, never touching her.

'Tell me,' he asked, 'what is your name?'

'Juliana.'

'Juliana. . . .' He lingered on the liquid syllables. Then speaking quickly: 'It is the name by which I am to keep you in my heart,' he whispered. 'That other name, the name that binds

you, I will have none of it. I am glad not to know it. I am glad you do not pronounce it.—Where were you born, Juliana ?’

‘In Italy.’

‘Italy ! . . . The land of Juliet, the land of Beatrice ! Juliana, you bring her music on your tongue, you bring her skies in your glance, her night in your hair. You have her love in your veins. Tell me no more. I am spirit, but I am flesh and blood too. I dare not !’

He drew back from her. She saw his hand grasp the table, marked the tremor that shook it. For the first time she could not endure the fire of his gaze and her eye drooped. A tremor, answer to his own, ran through her. Silence came between them.

The torches were nearly all dead. The prelate’s tomb was lost in darkness ; like a palpable thing, gloom was creeping up the church, from pillar to pillar, and all about them. Soon nothing would be left but the white oasis of the altar table, candle-lit, though still here and there a spark of fire gleamed about the nave. It seemed as if a thousand mysterious voices had been waiting for this moment of silence and darkness to uplift themselves. There came echoes and murmurs from the black spaces : now a clank of chains, as the wolf restlessly turned in his bed ; now a puffing sigh from the dozing bear. High up above their heads, the bat continued its narrowed rings of flight, moving with ghosts of sound more stealthy than silence itself.

The September night had clouded without ; probably rain was falling, for the wind had died. The tracery of the windows was but faintly visible in the great shell of gloom—here and there slender spectre shapes upon the denser shade. Ever and anon some small flake of stone or cement, detaching itself from the crumbling arches, ran into the silence as a trickle of water into a tranquil pool : the sands of time, dropping through the hour-glass, still measuring the life of the fallen church. Into the atmosphere of the place, which had been full of the resinous acidity of the torches, there now began to creep an earthy vault-like smell, as if it were the breath of the dead, chill and all-invading. It seemed to her that the life lingering about them in the old church gave way before it, as the life of waters before the spread of ice.

A clock bell struck upon the night—a single note that pulsed slowly away. Thereupon movement and clatter started without. Juliana knew it was the end of her hour. She looked at Wroth and read it also in his ashen face and trembling lip.

'The last toast that the abbey shall ever hear,' cried he then. 'Wroth drinks to his lady!'

He reached for one of the flagons that stood as yet untouched upon the stone and began pouring the dark wine into the skull. His hand was steady—Juliana liked to remember this. Then he raised the strange and awful cup in both hands, and over it his eyes flamed upon her:

'Before you go, before you pass back into the night, I drink to you—to the queen of my life. To my queen! To my lady! With every drop of wine that mingles with my blood it becomes consecrate to you! Listen, Juliana, for ever my beloved: never shall these lips touch woman's in life again—never again, but to you, shall this voice utter words of love. My soul has claimed yours. My body is henceforth for ever yours. So help me heaven!'

Then he lifted the skull and drank. And it seemed to Juliana as if it were her life that was passing into him, her soul, her very blood. It was their kiss of union; their kiss of renunciation.

He had drained the cup without once withdrawing it from his lips. Now, as he held it from him and drew a gasping breath, Juliana started from the trance-like state in which all her being had been absorbed into his.—The whole flagon at a single draught! Deep potations were usual enough, she knew, but this was incredible, this was madness.

'It is the end,' he said in a loud voice.

He turned the goblet: a few purple drops fell from it. Between both hands he tore the skull from the socket, crushing the massive mountings as if they had been cardboard. 'I can break a crown-piece between my fingers' had been no vain boast. Then he dashed the two pieces from him.

'None shall ever drink from old Ambrose's brain-pan again,' he cried wildly.

The skull hopped and rolled down the steps. A flush had mounted to his face, he was panting; he staggered and caught blindly at the nearest chair. Juliana rose, sadness and dread upon her. The sacristy door had opened under a decorous hand. Sedate footsteps, accompanied by a genteel tripping, a rustling of silk, came towards them: Bertram, the butler, advanced, conducting Mrs. Panton. Concern wrote itself on his withered fatherly face—concern, but no surprise.

'Oh, my lord, my lord!' said he. Shame for his master struggled

with the pity in his tones. Mrs. Panton, unctuous reprobation on her face, swept up to her mistress.

'Ah, Bertram,' cried Wroth thickly, 'you'll take the bear and the wolf to the kennels. The church has been re-consecrated—do you hear?—the church has been re-consecrated!'

He swayed as he clutched the crocket of the gothic chair; steadied himself but swayed again. Juliana averted her eyes.

'Madam,' said the old servant, his voice trembling, 'the carriage waits you at the porch—Madam, allow me to conduct you.'

Through his confused senses Wroth caught the words. He made a start forward, and fell, almost at Juliana's feet.

'My lord, oh, my lord!' cried Bertram again.

He hovered in distress between the lady and his master's prostrate form. Then affection overcame decorum. He knelt down, and pulled apart the stock which held the young throat. Wroth stirred, half opened unseeing eyes, and Bertram thought to catch the muttered words: 'Let me lie here.'

Quicker of comprehension, Juliana had heard aright: 'Let me die here. . . .' Her heart echoed the sigh. Would she herself could have died a little while ago, when they had soared in the heights together.

'He's dreadful drunk, my lady!—Oh, my lady,' cried Mrs. Panton, full of remorseful concern, 'why did I leave you?'

With a groan Bertram laid the beautiful flushed head down once more upon the stone; then rose, took a guttering candelabrum from the table, and bowed before the visitor.

'Pray, madam——' he urged.

She followed him silently; Panton went behind her, wagging her great bonnet. Trouble was in her excellent heart: how could she have abandoned her ladyship to the young reprobate? They were surely all bewitched to-night! She expected reproaches as they drove away—some outcry at least: she was met by a dumbness that cowed her.

Grand old words of lament were ringing in Juliana's heart:

'Lucifer, star of the morning, how art thou fallen! . . . Oh, the high peaks . . . the lofty blue!—And then, this!'

All at once something seemed [to break within her and the tears came.

(To be continued.)



